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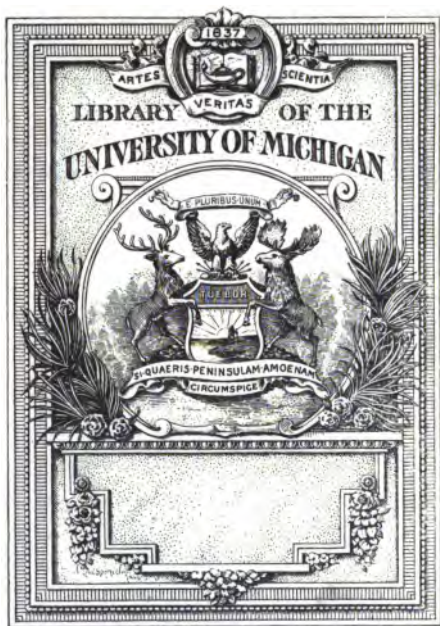
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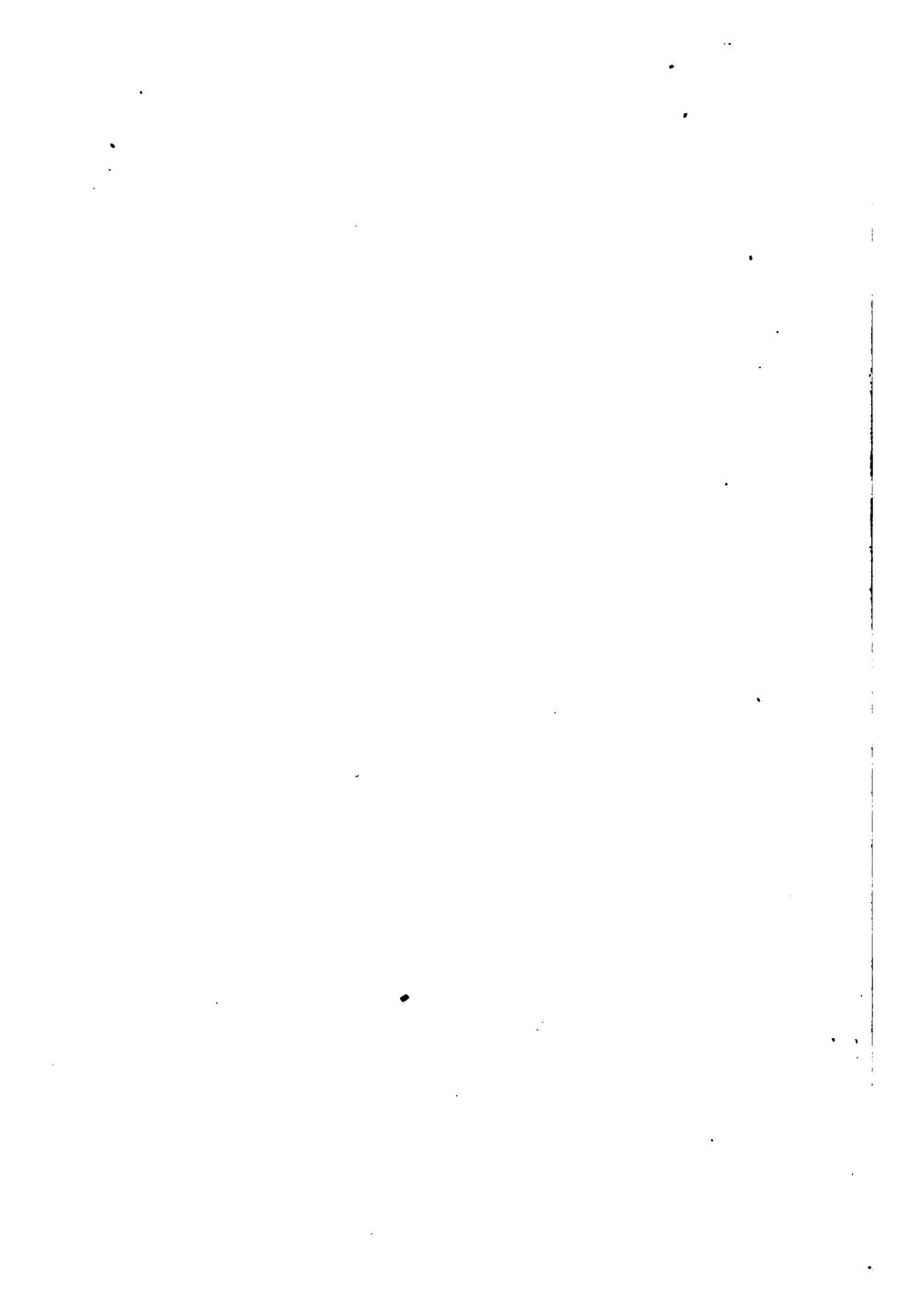
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*EDUCATION: THE OLD RUT AND
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*A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE DEBATE WHICH TOOK
PLACE IN THE LATE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE*

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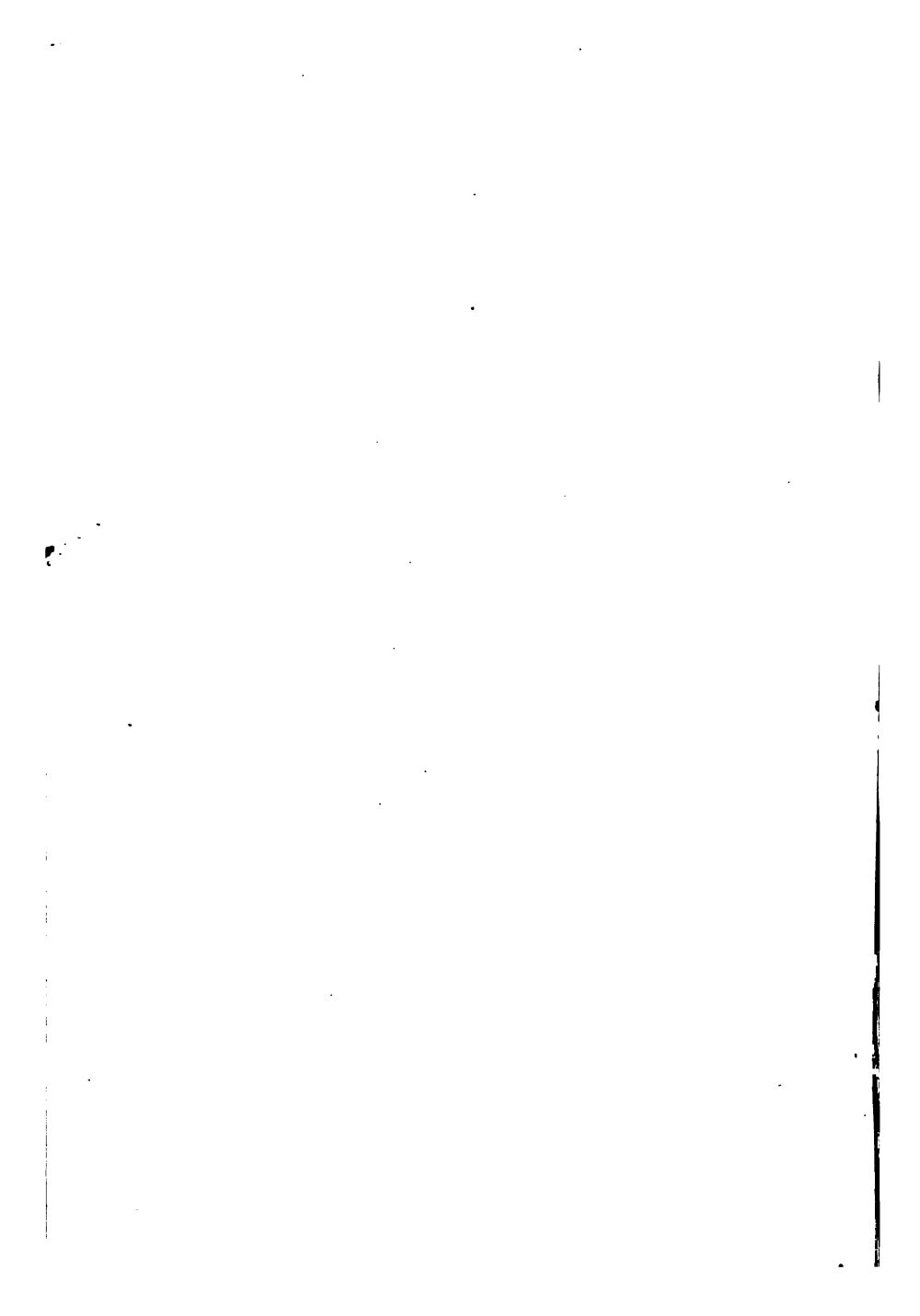
DENOMINATIONAL AND UNSECTARIAN
SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION.

BY A WESLEYAN MINISTER.

*Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates,
Sed magis amica Veritas."*

"While learning to read and write is a distinction, the few who have that distinction may be less inclined to work; but when everybody learns to read and write it is no longer a distinction."—DR. JOHNSON.

LONDON :
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1872.



P R E F A C E.

SHOULD the Author be expected to assign some reason for giving this volume to the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion in particular, and to the reading public generally, his reasons are briefly these—

That in his own judgment, and in the judgment of wiser men, the important debate conducted in the late Wesleyan Conference, on the great stirring and all absorbing question of National Education—*ought not* to be allowed to perish with the copies of ephemeral newspapers which professed to report the speeches delivered on the occasion.

That on the contrary, as the *fact* of the debate having taken place, will inevitably become matter of Methodist history, so the substance and character of the speeches delivered by the men who took part in that debate, ought likewise to be handed down in some portable and durable form, for the perusal and study of not only the present, but also future generations of Methodists, who, in the clearer light of their own age, shall be able to read **WHO**, in the year 1872, were the real friends and

benefactors of the Connexion and the Country, and who the well-meaning but mistaken foes of the best interests of both. Hence the present volume !

The fact that the great questions at issue in this debate are the very questions upon which the *Country* as well as Methodism is at this hour divided, cannot fail to invest the present volume with an interest and importance to the generality of readers, far beyond the pale of Methodism.

The Author confesses to another reason, which, perhaps more than any of those already given, has powerfully weighed with his mind, and constrained him to give this little book to the world. It is this :—Being at first struck with, and upon closer examination, intelligently convinced of the fact, that notwithstanding on the Denominational side of this debate were arrayed men of great powers, of high mental culture, of considerable tact and skill, and of large practice as disciplined debaters, they utterly failed to defend their system by either Scripture, sound reason, or solid argument ; failed signally, moreover, to bring into the field against the opposite side, anything which, when calmly and impartially considered, is felt to possess either strength or weight, and while thus displaying an unwonted weakness, which, in itself, is peculiarly significant, have, on the other hand, laid down principles, and given utterance to sentiments, which even the

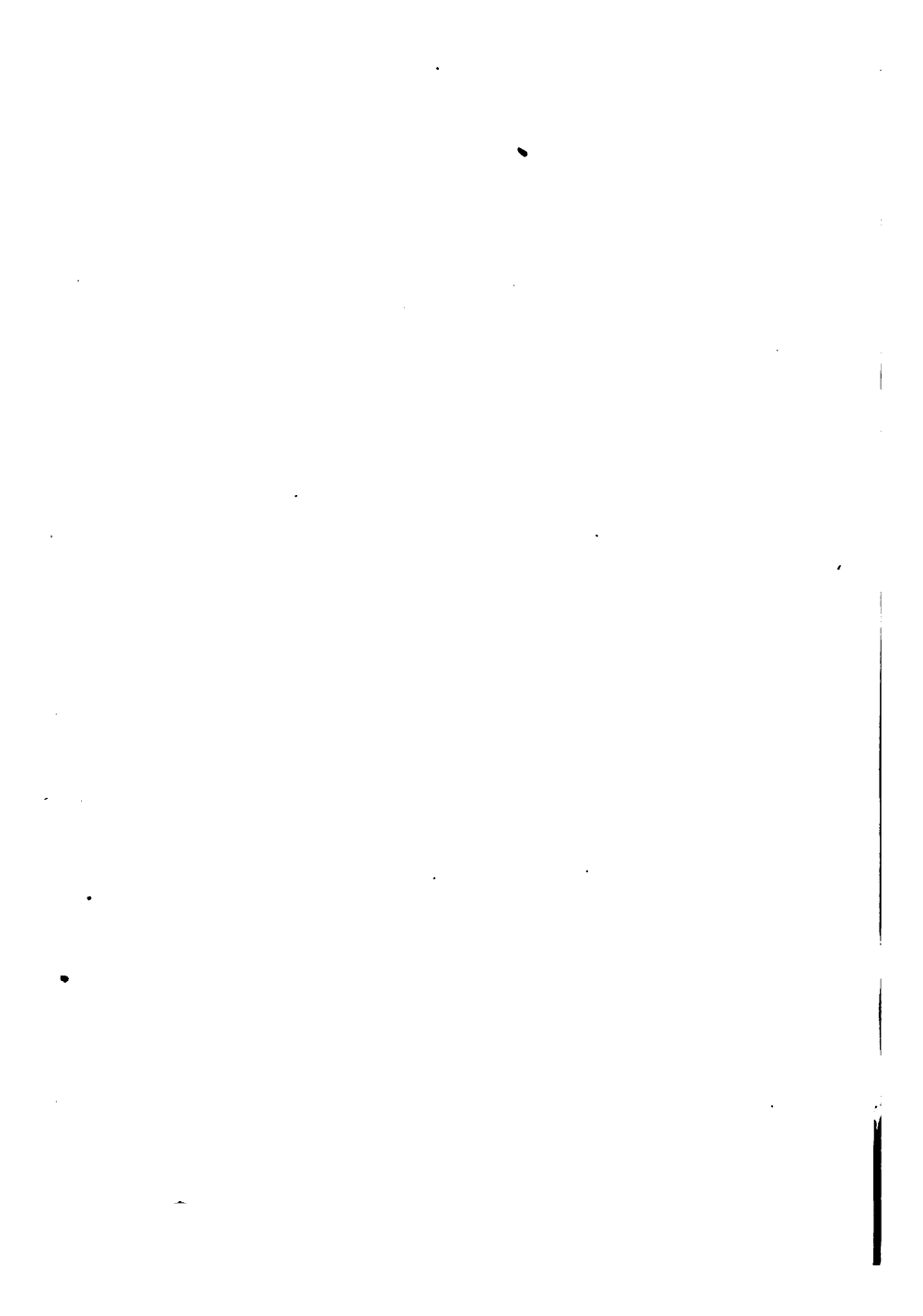
allowances to be made for the heat of controversy utterly fail to justify, and which the highest interests of Christian truth and this Protestant Nation *demand should be exposed and refuted*. This is a sacred duty, the discharge of which, however uninviting and painful, has been laid upon the Author's conscience, and has been rendered, if possible, even more imperative by the disclosures and results of the debate, just now closed, of the Special Educational Committee, appointed by the last Conference to meet and discuss the entire question. So flagrantly anti-Protestant and pro-Romish have been most of the utterances of the Wesleyan Denominationalists, that the Ultramontane journals of Ireland have spoken of them with rapture, as more ably advocating their cause, than could be risked by their own emissaries who have lived on the continent.

THE AUTHOR.



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CHAPTER I.

A GLANCE AT THE HISTORY OF THE GENERAL QUESTION.

NOT to acknowledge that the Evangelical Denominations of this country, in the work of Primary Education, have in the past rendered an important service to the age and the nation would be alike disingenuous and unjust.

Their meed of praise, too, ought to be all the more readily and cheerfully accorded, in view of the twofold fact, that the service thus rendered has been a generous *superaddition* to their true and proper work as churches, and that the responsibility was at first assumed when there was none to relieve them of it, or to share it with them. The urgent and painful necessity of the case at the outset must be at once their apology, justification and praise, for having undertaken a work which lay purely "*in other men's line of things*," and while this peculiarity of the case continued, all honour to the churches which, unaided and alone, did so good a work so long. In this respect they stand out in noble and striking contrast to the *Popish Church*, which, whenever and wherever she becomes mistress of the field, not only ceases to educate the people, but deliberately, studiously and systematically takes away the key of knowledge from all who own her authority, reducing them to a state of semi, or of total, barbarism, and which only *simulates* the "Educator" when there is competition in the field, and State money to be obtained for the special effort.

This is an important distinction which equity asks should be ever borne in mind. The truth, moreover, would not be fully told, perhaps, nor would more than scant justice be done to the Evangelical Denominations of this country, did we not add that their noble example as pioneers in the work of primary education has more, perhaps, than any other cause whatever excusitated at length, both the Nation and its Government, out of the torpor in which they once slumbered, and inspired them with that very zeal and activity for the education of the masses which recent years have manifested, and by which the present day is happily distinguished.

This admitted, we have in this connection said all, perhaps, which either justice demands or the Denominations themselves can reasonably expect or desire.

A state of things entirely different has now to be looked at and dealt with from that which in this nation existed when the Christian Churches, "stretching themselves beyond themselves," took into their own hands the work, *their strange work*, of teaching children and adults to read, write, spell, and cipher. What, let us ask, is the altered state of things to which we now refer? Why, largely it may be, owing to the salutary influence of the Church's own example in this matter, the Nation and its Government, however late, have been stirred up at length to the point of an intense interest and activity relative to the ignorance and demoralisation of the youthful masses, and to a deep conviction that it is the duty of the State to assume the responsibility of educating these neglected and increasing myriads. A conviction this which is all the more deep because it has grown so gradually, and is likely to prove all the more

abiding for having taken so long to develop into a thing of maturity.

As matter of fact, then, this state of things now exists, *and in it* the several Denominations have got to deal not so much with this or that abstract notion, idea, or theory, as to grapple with a great stubborn, national fact. Had the State, at an earlier period, been alive to its duty in this matter, and assumed, as it ought, the responsibility of educating the lower classes, who either could not or would not educate themselves, it cannot for a moment be supposed that any of the Churches of the land would *at that time* have felt themselves aggrieved, or that it would, for once, have occurred to them that it formed *any part* of their duty to undertake such an enterprise. On the contrary, it is morally certain that the very enlightenment and philanthropy which prompted them to go out of themselves, so as to attempt this work, however feebly and imperfectly, rather than that it should be *utterly neglected*, would have led them heartily to rejoice that the State was recognising, and about to do its proper work, leaving *them* free and unfettered to pursue their *exclusively spiritual calling*.

At the commencement, we say, the course which the State is now willing and wishful to pursue would, by the Evangelical Churches of this land, have been regarded as a boon, not a blight—a thing to be unfeignedly thankful for, not to be wrangled about. The vested interest which the several Denominations *now have* in the educational machinery of the country may, indeed, be naturally enough supposed to weigh with them as a consideration, and we presume few would be so unreasonable as to expect them to sacrifice such interests

without remuneration. Setting such a consideration aside as an argument, therefore, by meeting it as a claim, in what other respect does the Christian Church's relation to the Education question, at the present day, differ from what that position would have been at first had the State recognised and done its duty as already pointed out? We answer, in no sense whatever does the case stand differently so as to make the course, which would *then* have shown the Church's wisdom, a less wise policy to be pursued by her now. Essential principles *are not*, and *cannot be*, changed by mere accidents. That the Denominations have so long been so closely associated with the work of education in this country, or that they ever became associated with it at all, is a *mere accident*, and, therefore, to represent, by word or conduct, that the educational interest, and their own spiritual interests as Churches are identical, exhibits a gross confounding of things which, in themselves, essentially differ, and which the Divine Head of the Church manifestly never designed should be blended. If, in the abstract, it is no part of the Christian Church's work or duty to become a Secular Educator, then it forms no part of either the one or the other now. If generations ago, a stern necessity constrained the Church to step out of her path and become a teacher of reading, writing, and arithmetic, as the lesser of two evils, then necessity is its own law, and can be urged in justification of her course at that period. No sooner, however, has that justifying necessity ceased to exist (and such is the fact at the present hour), than she is left without excuse if she does not withdraw from that which never belonged to her, and re-devote her undivided energies to her own

high and nobler vocation. As already intimated, then, the necessity for the Church's powers being diverted, and divided between her own proper work and school-keeping in this land, has almost entirely passed away ; while the humiliating fact, in connection with this is, that the course pointed out alike by Reason, Scripture, and the great principles of true Religion, is just the course which Churches professing to be ruled by all these do not feel disposed to take, but are apparently bent upon pursuing its opposite until literally forced to abandon their undignified and untenable position with a bad grace and a poor reward. This, when duly considered, lays the Church's motives open to the grave suspicion of being anxious and determined, even at the sacrifice of much good, to arrogate to herself a power, a work, and a position which never properly belonged to her ; and is in effect to follow, however distantly at first, yet unmistakably, in the wake of the noxious Papacy which began with worldly ambition and ended in the tyrannical assumption of the temporal supremacy !

This Denominational System of Education, then, which, at the best, or least objectionable period of its history, was a necessary evil, has, through the operation of the Concurrent Endowment principle adopted by Government, and the gross partiality shown to the so-called " State Church " in connection therewith, become a source of bitter grievance, and the instrument of inflicting gross injustice upon almost all in the nation except the Denomination as by law established, and an anti-constitutional papacy. The evils essentially and inseparably connected with the working of such a system it was not difficult to foresee. Accordingly, they were foreseen, and the

entire system, because of such evils, was earnestly resisted by conscientious Dissenters. Not so, unfortunately, by any considerable number of the Wesleyan Denomination. These, as a whole, are by Nonconformists viewed as "*trimmers between*," while their own professed policy has long been non-intervention or neutrality. In theory this position is easily maintained, but not so in practice. Hence, by declaring with Churchmen and Papists in favour of the Denominational System, with its implied Concurrent Endowment, Wesleyans, and not without reason, have by Dissenters been long regarded as having in this important matter departed from and violated their professed neutrality, by throwing the weight of their influence into the scale with the Papist and the Churchman, and, in the same proportion, against the Nonconformists of the country. Their reward has been "the husks which the swine do eat," say some, while, more accurately, "the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table," after the children of the so-called State Church and the Papacy are well fed, say others. Is this what is referred to, we sometimes wonder, when "the great principles which we have maintained from the beginning" are in the mouths of some men? If so, the sooner they are changed the better. Let it not be wondered at, then, that such a position as the reward of not too noble a course, has for years been growingly distasteful to a large and ever increasing number of both ministers and laymen in the Wesleyan Connexion; nor that, with recent legislation tending only to buttress and extend such a system, and to multiply and intensify its evils, the entire Denominational System has become positively hateful in the eyes of (we

believe, and predict that facts will soon prove) a large majority of both the ministers and laymen of the Wesleyan Church, and by whom it cannot be much longer endured, within Methodism at least. Certain prominent and, in other respects, able and excellent men in the Wesleyan ministry, there are, indeed, who hold opposite views, and they may well be excused for doing so. They were born under, and have been cradled and nurtured in, the present system, without the advantage of seeing, or even desiring to see it, side by side with another and a better than itself. They remember, moreover, the forms, and, as yet, move in presence of the shadows, of greater men, who are fallen; they remember their popularity, their influence, within the pale of Methodism and beyond it; the name which they had, some for learning, some for eloquence and oratory, some for argumentative and administrative ability. In a word, they remember their greatness, and they call to mind that *those great men did not oppose*, but, on the contrary, occasionally advocated the Denominational System; and how natural to forget, just at the proper moment, that those men were great and good, *not on account, but in spite of*, such advocacy. The men in Methodism who at present speak as though, because their Church was unfortunate enough to decide in favour of Denominationalism in the past, she is laid under the necessity of perpetuating the mistake indefinitely, surely forget that Methodism and the Denominational System have not wed each other "so long as *they both* shall live," in virtue of that unfortunate alliance once formed. These men, however, hold the position (suppose it) in the Conference which the greater dead once occupied; and

how natural to regard with suspicion, views and schemes which were never put forth by "the fathers," and which, it is gratuitously assumed, are now held and advocated chiefly by *young men*. Two powerful objections, then, have by "the fathers" to be urged against this opposition to the Denominational System. First, "our Methodist forefathers were satisfied with it;" and, secondly, "the opposition cannot be a safe or sound policy because," as erroneously alleged, "it comes chiefly from young men." If this is to be the principle, then we would recommend a return to stage-coaches and saddle-bags, and the unqualified condemnation of railway travelling. We conceive they both come under the same category, and that the principle already alluded to would embrace them both; while the Unsectarian System of Education, as opposed to the Denominational, like railway travelling, as opposed to the old, tardy mode of locomotion, is demanded by the necessities of the times we live in, and is a way-mark in the march of enlightened progress and improvement, by whomsoever espoused or advocated, on the one hand, or resisted and condemned on the other. So long as our nation and its Government remained blind to their work and duty of educating the ignorant and outcast masses, so long the Denominations had it all to themselves, Wesleyan Methodism included, and, notwithstanding that their position was a false one, and notwithstanding their utter incompetency either to overtake or keep pace with the wants of the masses, yet the absence of a rival who could do the work better secured substantial unity, if not universal satisfaction, within the pale of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. An entirely different state of things having

been ushered in, however, most naturally, reasonably, and righteously calls forth and demands a different state of feeling in relation to the old and, at best, exceptionable system, which has served its day and generation so inadequately, and which justice and the best interests of truth and this nation now demand should give place to a better.

The feelings of dissatisfaction and dislike with which the Denominational System has long been regarded—having for years burned like a smouldering fire within the breasts of a still increasing number of both Wesleyan ministers and laymen—have at length found vent and appeared upon the surface; while the attempt of some, if not to stamp out the fire, at least to send it in again by repressive measures, to smoulder for another indefinite period, was that which, at the recent Conference, put such a strain upon the bonds of fraternal love and unity as to threaten the Connexion with faction and disruption, had not the tension been relaxed upon the strings, had not the repressive policy been abandoned, and the fire allowed full vent, by being turned into the safe and legitimate channel of a free and open discussion of the entire question. The important debate which the relative claims of the two rival systems of education—the Denominational and the National—evoked and called forth in one of the largest, if not unqualifiedly the largest ecclesiastical assembly in Europe or Christendom, can hardly fail to be of *general interest and importance*. And, convinced that truth has nothing to fear or lose by publicity, and error nothing to gain, we are now resolved to give the world the benefit of that discussion.

CHAPTER II.

SPEECH OF REV. WILLIAM ARTHUR, M.A.

THE diverging and conflicting schools of thought on the Education Question by which for years the country at large has been divided, have, during the same period, most sensibly divided—happily not in spirit and feeling as yet, but in judgment, in strong opinion and deep conviction—the Wesleyan Church and Ministry. Unmistakable evidence of this had been given at several annual Conferences of that body, and might have been more readily understood and more duly respected by the advocates there of the Denominational System.

Their slowness to recognise the existence of any opposition to their fondly-cherished notions has neither prevented nor arrested that opposition from spreading, nor from gathering strength continually as it runs. On the other hand, it is well known that the overweening confidence of some in the “Educational Department,” as manifested in the temerity with which they have on all possible occasions reiterated their Denominational sentiments, since opinion on the question became divided, and given forth those sentiments to the press and the country, as though they were the uncontested and incontestible views of Wesleyan Methodism, has had much to do in awakening feelings bordering upon indignation; in accelerating a crisis and forcing a division in the Connexion. It was not to be supposed that hundreds of ministers, and many thousands of the Wesleyan

laity, holding diametrically opposite views to those put forth would long continue tamely to submit to having their intelligent and conscientious convictions thus systematically ignored, or officially misrepresented. Hence, at the last Annual Conference, it was not one, but many of its members who, as the mouthpiece of those thousands, stood prepared, not simply to oppose the Denominational System as inefficient and pernicious, but boldly to ask *that Conference to discard the principle at once and for ever* in favour of Unsectarian schools! Four of these ministers, without concert or consultation with each other, but simply impelled by a sense of duty, actually gave notices of motion touching the same vital points of the great question. In proof of the substantial unity of those notices of motion, it need only be remembered that three of the four leaders judiciously and voluntarily withdrew their respective motions in favour of that presented by the Rev. William Arthur, M.A. Mr. Arthur, an ex-president of the Wesleyan Conference—a man of keen insight, of comprehensive view, of unusually sound judgment, a wise legislator, and an able administrator in the Church which he adorns—knowing the state of feeling amongst a large portion of his ministerial brethren, and abroad in Methodism, and knowing also the importance of the safety-valve before the pent-up steam has reached the bursting point—put his judicious hand to that valve, and lifted it, by bringing forward, in the Wesleyan Conference, on Tuesday, the 13th of August last, the following Resolution:—“That, considering the difficulties of the Denominational System of Education, the Conference judges it desirable that it should be gradually merged in

a system of united Unsectarian schools, with the Bible under School Boards." The speech with which this motion was followed up by Mr. Arthur will, of course, be variously estimated, and has been differently characterised by different minds, holding different views on the subject with which it deals. One small critic, ill concealing his vexation at views being advanced so widely different from his own has fixed upon the speaker's manner, and, mistaking perspicuity and convincing demonstration for harshness and severity, captiously represents the speech as having been delivered with "an incisiveness bordering upon dogmatism." Another of the same school, compelled to feel, though not to acknowledge, the powerful effect produced by it in the assembly in which it was delivered, attempts to attribute its success entirely to the *able manner* in which it was delivered, and by inference to represent the *matter* as containing in itself nothing calculated to convince or impress an intelligent audience! Impartial judges will allow such observations to pass for what they are worth, when weighed in the balance of candour. Those who were privileged to listen to the living voice of Mr. Arthur, and to see his gestures, attitude, and bearing on the occasion referred to, may be allowed to be, if they will, the best judges of *mere mannerism*. Those, on the contrary, who have to judge of Mr. Arthur's speech as handed to them by the reporter, are in the most favourable position to decide—manner being inadmissible here—upon its merits, reference being had exclusively to its intrinsic worth, its power of argument, its soundness of logic, its force of truth.

That Mr. Arthur's manner is somewhat incisive

naturally, must be admitted by all who know him only as a public speaker; but an impartial review of the speech now in question will make it manifest that, however keen and deep were felt to be the *incisions* which it made into certain notions and theories to which it was opposed, it was *the thing said*, not the manner in which it was spoken; *the truth delivered*, not the delivery, which made the impression and produced the effect. In short, the mighty power which all felt Mr. Arthur was wielding over the minds of his brethren by the said speech was entirely owing to the fact that an able man had got *the right side* of a controverted question. Had Mr. Arthur either contemplated or attempted any heightened effect by the mere display of oratory, ill health and feeble voice, from both of which he was at the time suffering, would have effectually militated against it, and prevented his success. In point of fact, however, Mr. Arthur's *style* was by no means up to the mark of his natural and usual ability when called to deal with great questions on great occasions. If in point of style the speech of which Mr. Arthur in the late Conference delivered himself was remarkable for anything, it was its unlaboured, lucid, natural simplicity, and if power and weight were further carried home by it—and they unquestionably were—the secret of these is to be found in Mr. Arthur's general ability “by manifestation of the truth to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.”

There are occasions and connections in which *truth*, if she is to have a tongue and an utterance at all, must in the very nature of things be felt by some to be “*incisive*,” and in which, however incidentally stated, the incisory

action is felt to be all the more deep and keen, the more plainly the truth is spoken. Mr. Arthur's speech against the Denominational System of Education was delivered in precisely and peculiarly such a connection. It was impossible for the Denominational System to be attacked in the Wesleyan Conference with becoming fidelity and severity, whether by Mr. Arthur or any other man who was master of his subject, without that attack being felt to cut right and left by some. Mr. Arthur began by felicitating himself and congratulating his brethren, that during the last four years the ground had been cleared of many of the imaginary obstructions to unanimity which were then supposed to exist. He could not, however, even incidentally state the undeniable fact that, in 1868, those who differed from him "thought that the Denominational principle *alone* must be admitted by the country, and that anything like a National System represented by School Boards, was out of the question,"—without making the Denominationalists around him feel how short-sighted they had been, if not also how ill-qualified they were to represent the views and feelings of the nation on the subject, or to direct the future educational policy of the Wesleyan Connexion! This, to some at least, would unquestionably be "*incision*" number one! The unpleasant but unavoidable *operation* would doubtless be repeated by Mr. Arthur's reference to the same want of penetration on the part of the same school, in relation to "the rural districts and provinces," and also in relation to "the 25th clause" of the Elementary Education Act, immediately before it became law! Here, matter of fact, having a most important bearing upon the question at issue, must either

be repressed or uncomfortable *incisions* must be made, and "*dogmatism*" complained of.

The very ability with which Mr. Arthur handled his subject and sustained his position, while it might and must have commanded their secret admiration of the man, could produce no comfortable feeling within the minds of his educational opponents, as he pointed out, with a force of truth which there was no attempt to gainsay or resist, the pro-Popish and "anti-Bible" tendency and bearing of their Denominationalism, while they sincerely and earnestly, but mistakenly and illogically, inveighed against both Popery and Infidelity. "Let not the Methodist banner be the Pope's banner," said Mr. Arthur. "I see a large and noble band of men of the Church of England marching under the banner of Denominationalism, and the Pope blesses the banner, and *his* best men hold it up. That is not the flag for me to serve under. On the other hand, I see a vast body of Dissenters marching under the banner of Secularism, and the infidels of the nation say, "Well done." That is not the flag in which I can fold myself up and comfortably lie down and die on the field of battle. But whether I die before it is raised or not, I believe the Methodist Conference will set up the Methodist banner, which shall be a Bible school for united England, and, dying under that banner, my closing eye will see alighting upon it from above the blessing of God, and from below the blessing of the poor." . . .

"What I want is that we should go for a system of Bible schools for all England. I go against the Denominational System first, because it is anti-Bible," said Mr. Arthur. "It endows the Romish school which puts

down the Bible. Secondly, it endows and empowers the High Church school, which does everything it possibly can to smother up the Bible under ecclesiastical vestments and millinery. Thirdly, it endows the infidel school in which the religion 'there is no God' may be taught; and, as the consequence of all this, it converts by the thousand the best men in the land to a system of non-Bible schools. They say, 'rather than this, let us proclaim aloft the principle that schooling is only schooling, and not education;' that the schoolmaster never was the man, recognised by the Church or the family, to do the Church's work, or the father's work; that there is mischief in the principle, and, therefore, of the two, we accept the Secular school, rather than the Denominational System."

"Why," continued Mr. Arthur, "is there danger of losing the Bible out of the school altogether? Does the danger come from the people's dislike of the Bible? No; but because the people find that men plead for the Bible and mean the Sectarian System; that they argue for the Bible in the school, and then go on heaping endowments upon Popery and all other sects; and if this be suffered to go on, it will work the Bible out of the schools of England. It has already made Methodist preachers go for that; it has made multitudes of pious and devoted Dissenters go for that; it has made ninety men in the House of Commons, and in the teeth of the strongest government go for that; it will bring it about if we don't take care; it is a system of Concurrent Endowment."

To tell men who have always declaimed against Popery and Infidelity, that they are practically playing into the hands of, and aiding and abetting both; and

especially to *prove it to them*, by logic and by fact, which they could neither overturn nor deny; could not in their experience prove otherwise than in the sharpest sense, and to the highest degree, "*incisive*;" but who, we ask, is to be blamed and condemned for this? Is truth, or is Mr. Arthur? Are not Denominationalists to be blamed? and, seeing that they could neither reassert their principle, nor defend their system against such grave and fatal charges, ought it not to be unqualifiedly condemned and voluntarily abandoned by even themselves? If not, it is because "*they will not suffer it to die after it has been fairly and honestly killed!*"

Several other parts of Mr. Arthur's speech were of such a nature as to urge with peculiar force upon the Wesleyan Connexion, the acceptance of his Resolution with the principles it embodied; and as to show that their true and best interests could only be guarded and conserved by their unqualified rejection of the Denominational System.

The light in which Mr. Arthur placed the present "Elementary Education Act," when he invited the Conference to "take that Act, look at, and see the conflicting sides of it; the one presenting a Denominational System, and as such dividing the country; the other a National System, and as such, aiming at uniting it"—although the correct view, was nevertheless, manifestly an entirely new view to the more prominent of his Denominational brethren. This is manifest, not only from the fact that none of them previously presented that view of the matter; but that, when it *was* presented, they utterly failed to see it, and still more to perceive its import, for they argued as though that "Act" contained *but one*

side, and as though therefore they were bound either to maintain the Denominational System *intact*, or to reject the Government measure *in toto*! This they neither could nor would have done, had not Mr. Arthur's view of the matter been entirely new and unthought of by them, and had they not, when it was put before them, failed to comprehend its real import and bearing; as also the force of Mr. Arthur's point in presenting it. Here in effect, said Mr. Arthur, is an Act which, as presented to the country by the legislature, has got *two conflicting* sides to it: one the Denominational side, tending to split up the country into religious factions, the other the Unsectarian side, tending to unite the nation by providing approximately at least, a common ground upon which the mass of the people can stand and agree.

The bi-faced character of the Act may or may not have been intended as a *feeler* by the Government, to see on which side the majority of the nation would array themselves; but, be that as it may, here *are* the two conflicting sides:—You, as a Conference, representing the Wesleyan Connexion in this nation, have gone in with the Denominational side hitherto; the evils of this are now many and manifest. In asking you to declare now in favour of the Unsectarian principle, you are not asked to assume a position of hostility to the Government measure already passed and in operation, but simply to transfer your influence and weight to the other—the National side of that measure, and to seek the extension to the entire nation of the principle actually embraced by the Act, and in practical operation in many towns and districts.

Nothing, it has appeared to us, could be more simple and lucid than Mr. Arthur's meaning at this particular part of his speech ; and yet hardly does anything appear more manifest, from certain speeches which followed, than that, either from an unavoidable or an artificial obtuseness, Mr. Arthur's putting of the case was entirely thrown away upon certain of his Denominational brethren present. Had the force and bearing of Mr. Arthur's point been fully perceived, it must have been accepted ; and, if accepted, it would have left no place for the lengthy and complex "Amendment" which followed the seconding of Mr. Arthur's Resolution by Dr. Waddy.

CHAPTER III.

THE REV. WILLIAM SHAW.

THE Rev. William Shaw concluded a speech in opposition to Mr. Arthur's Resolution by moving the following Amendment (Will the reader pardon its circumlocution ?) :—

“That considering that the question of Primary Education—after having been widely discussed throughout the country, and particularly by large and mixed committees appointed by the Conference for the purpose, which met in the years 1868, 1869, and 1870, has been dealt with by the Education Act, 1870, and that Act is only in course of being carried with effect. Considering also that the Government have intimated their intention to propose some alterations in that Act during the next Session, and it is desirable to know the nature of those alterations before any further opinion on the general question is expressed by the Conference. Considering also that the question is one in which the laity of Methodism have a deep and lively interest, and as to which they are entitled to be consulted before any resolution be passed involving a departure from those principles in regard to national education which have been long recognised, and acted upon, in the Connexion, this Conference deems it inexpedient to re-open the question at present, at the same time in view of the possibility of alterations in the existing Act, the Conference confides it to the President to convene a meeting of the United

Committees of Privileges and Education, and such other persons as he may deem suitable, should he be of opinion that such alterations are of sufficient importance to justify him in doing so." What a mighty effort to bring forth nothing, for that is the policy!

"That considering that," &c., &c. To assign as a reason why the Education question should not be discussed, nor any opinion pronounced upon it by the Conference—the circumstance that "mixed committees, appointed by the Conference for that purpose, had in 1868, 1869, and 1870, met and widely discussed" the question *then*, is only to revive the memory of what the Denominationalists in Methodism might well wish to forget, themselves, and to be forgotten by their brethren of the opposite school. Some of us have a recollection of the meeting of those committees which is much more vivid than grateful, edifying, or agreeable.

We remember the attempts which semi-official journals made to raise their readers' expectations to an unusual altitude with regard to the importance of those committees while they were in session. We remember the same organs somewhat sensationally endeavouring to heighten the interest of suspense by conducting us to the door of those committee rooms, giving us a clandestine peep in at the cloistered ones, and then, with an air of mysterious importance, shaking the head, and adding, *but their discussions are too able, and their decisions too important to be made known at present!* We remember, after they had thus met in conclave, discussed, disagreed, reconsidered, argued, re-asserted, conceded, compromised, agreed and separated—being through the same medium pompously told of the talent of the debaters, the consummate

ability of the debate ! the vast importance to Methodism and the country at large of the decisions come to : how much wiser and better the Connexion and the nation would be were they only let into the secret ; and concluding with a farcical expression of regret, that this could not be ! These are but some of the puerilities to which sensible minds were treated in connection with the do-little policy of those committees to which reference is made in the above Amendment.

Having once proved the consummate ability with which such committees may accomplish nothing, Mr. Shaw has delightfully ready recourse to them as his shortest way out of a dilemma, and in the terms of his Amendment displays most masterly tact in convening them again, that they may address themselves to the formidable task of nothing, and, of course, come to no decision upon it ! "The President of the Conference to convene a meeting of these mixed committees," &c., "should he deem himself justified in doing so." There *his* duty is made to end, while that of the committee ends in simply *meeting*. A splendid blank, an ingenious inactivity, is that which Mr. Shaw, if he did not propose to his own mind, proposed at least to the Conference. Happily, he did not find a majority in the mood for adopting such a vigorous air-beating policy, so that the Resolution, which was at length accepted, is not only more satisfactory in its general terms, but has rescued the committee to be convened from the regions of mere speculation and idle talk, and brought them face to face with real work by the concluding clause—" *With power to act.*" The composition of this committee, moreover, being of a more REPRESENTATIVE character than has ever

yet been convened by any president of the Wesleyan Conference, it is to be fully hoped that they will enter upon the Education question with the determination to do actual work, and to declare a policy for the Connexion.

Having said this in more immediate connection with *the terms* of Mr. Shaw's Amendment, we now come to deal more directly with his speech. As to the unusual ability with which Mr. Shaw acquitted himself, his opponents themselves must confess it. The admirable construction of the speech gave evidence of its having been well studied; while his attack upon a Resolution, already withdrawn, showed his firm resolve to turn neither to the right hand nor to the left, from ought which he had prepared. The character of Mr. Shaw's delivery, moreover, considering the difficulties he encountered by the way, was worthy of the best days of his eloquence, and, proceeding from a man venerable for years, and of blameless life, deserved perhaps a more patient hearing than he was able to command. Like the great oratorical efforts of many other public speakers of this age, Mr. Shaw's speech was ushered in by a humble apology—an apology, of course, whose effect was to be found in the surprise of the sequel.

We confess to a high respect for Mr. Shaw personally, and it is therefore with regret and disappointment that we find his speech, notwithstanding the evidence it contains of having been carefully prepared—so deformed by blemishes in relation to its subject matter; so void of sound argument to wit; so specious and yet so hollow; so feeble in the points of its greatest strength: in short, such an utter wind-bag as to be no sooner pierced by sound criticism than it shrinks into a collapse; no

sooner touched by the finger of calm reason and an honest logic than it reduces itself to a shadow. The perception by his brethren of its many "transparent fallacies," as Mr. Shaw proceeded, must be urged in extenuation of the unusual impatience, extending to frequent interruptions, manifested by his audience, during the course of the delivery.

Considering the sober matter of fact turn of Mr. Shaw's mind, it has taken some of us by surprise that, with so little reason on his side, he should have played the barrister so plausibly, and handled his client's case so dexterously amid such an utter destitution of materials for a solid defence.

True, his amendment was of wondrous length, but he carefully steered clear of its several topics, did not even design that it should contribute a solitary thought towards the matter of his speech, and, less still, that that speech should be a defence of the Denominational System. Between the oration and the terms of the Amendment read over it, there was as little discoverable relevancy or natural connection as between both, and Mr. Arthur's assault upon the Sectarian System of Education.

At one thing Mr. Shaw's speech and Amendment did aim—the arrest of inquiry, the stifling of discussion, the suppression or staving off, of any expression of views or convictions, however deep and conscientious, which might be found out of harmony with his own and those of his Denominational brethren. This, however, being neither the age nor subject favourable to enforced silence, the great object aimed at was in consequence a signal failure. Mr. Shaw, like the other gentlemen on

the same side who followed him, made no serious attempt whatever to advocate or defend the continuance in Methodism of the Denominational System of Education ; but, like men realising that their own house was hopelessly falling, directed their great powers exclusively to the task of detecting flaws in the wall of their neighbour's building, which was about to be raised upon a better site, and to be held on a better tenure. The position thus chosen, while giving proof of their conscious inability, by any amount of propping, to prolong the days of their own condemned and crumbling edifice, had, at least, the advantage of affording ample scope for the exercise of the captious and cavilling talent ; nor did the good brethren refrain from exercising their gifts in the direction indicated.

Mr. Shaw, in adverting to some of the grounds upon which the Denominational house was being condemned, such as the undue acquisition and tyrannical exercise of clerical power in rural districts—with his usual candour admitted the fact, with the repeated and emphasized assurance, “ *most distinctly I admit,*” &c. But what will the impartial reader think of our legal friend, Mr. Bedford, on the same side, attempting to throw doubt upon the facts so freely admitted by Mr. Shaw ? so repeatedly complained of by numbers of his brethren ? so incontestably demonstrated times without number, and to the official condemnation of which, Mr. Bedford, as a member of the “ Education Committee,” had already lent himself as a consenting party ! Surely, the cause must be incorrigibly bad which has to be buttressed by sophisms involving such an inconsistent forgetfulness of one's own past position and doings. The Rev. B. Gregory himself, like Mr.

Bedford, an Ultra-denominationalist, in opposition to Mr. Bedford's insinuations of doubt, as to the oppression and tyranny of State Church clergymen—was compelled to admit to the Conference that, despite the "Conscience Clause," he had "had to fight, not only against all the clergy of his locality, backed by a bishop, but also with a squire and a duke" in resisting this very tyranny and oppression. But here we must leave the fraternal trio, Messrs. Shaw, Bedford, and Gregory to adjust their differences as to *matter of fact*, while we proceed to notice the former gentleman's total misapprehension of Mr. Arthur's position, while attempting to argue against it.

Admitting that, "in numerous instances which had occurred during some years past, Church influence had been brought to bear in a manner which had trenched upon the religious rights and liberties of the people," Mr. Shaw asks, "By what, then, has the recent Act in any degree sanctioned the abuse of that power?" &c. Now, if Mr. Arthur's position had been one of antagonism to "the recent Act," there might have been some little force in this inquiry; but as, on the contrary, Mr. Arthur had distinctly called the attention of Mr. Shaw and the Conference to "*the two conflicting sides of that Act*—the one, the Denominational side, dividing the country, the other, the National side, tending to unite it," and asked the Conference, *not to resist the Act*, but to array itself on the National side, which, equally with the other, would be carrying the Act with effect. Mr. Shaw's triumphant dilation on this point was utterly destitute of force, unless it be the force of misconception.

Another of Mr. Shaw's "transparent fallacies" is

found in the reason which he assigns for his rhetorically expressed indignation against Mr. Arthur for having referred to the Church and State principle involved in the Denominational System of Education. "It involves," said Mr. Arthur, "the disputed right of the State to teach religion." "No doubt," replies Mr. Shaw, "it is a disputed point, and I feel somewhat indignant that any attempt should be made to bring in that disputed question, when Conference has again and again refused to entertain it as a Conference question." But stay, stay, Mr. Shaw! where is the reason, where is the logic of all this? "The Conference has again and again refused to entertain the disputed right of the State to teach religion as a Conference question!" Precisely so, and hence the propriety, hence the consistency, hence the reasonableness, hence the validity, hence the point and the power of Mr. Arthur's objection, when he finds that while the Conference thus professedly refuses to *entertain that disputed point*, it at the same time in another form **SETTLES** *that disputed point*, and settles it in favour of the State's having the right to teach religion! This is simply an impregnable position for Mr. Arthur; and, for Mr. Shaw to affect and express indignation that Mr. Arthur should feel himself aggrieved in this matter, and should gently ask the Conference to look at the question of *self-consistency*—goes to prove one of two things; either that Mr. Shaw's logic, or his sense of common fairness and justice, is lamentably deficient. We believe Mr. Shaw to be a strictly just, and in all relations of life, a most conscientious man; and, therefore, for this act of flagrant, but unintentional unfairness, and apparent intolerance, Mr. Shaw's judgment, the illogical cast of his

mind, and his not too eminent powers for a *clear and ready* apprehension of controverted points, must be held perhaps to be solely responsible. If not, then Mr. Shaw's position amounts to this. Because "Conference has again and again refused to entertain as a Conference question the disputed right of the State to teach religion:" because in theory it takes and professes to maintain on this question a strictly neutral position; therefore, although in the Denominational System of Education it practically acknowledges and accepts the State's right in this matter, yet as long as the *theory of neutrality* is professed "I feel indignant that any attempt should be made" *to object to the practical violation of our professed neutrality!*

Nothing so repugnant to reason and opposed to the very first principles of common justice and honesty could possibly be meant by Mr. Shaw, and yet, even allowing his expressed indignation to have been nothing more than a flourish of rhetoric, the expression of it in such a connection logically amounts to all we have indicated.

Whoever would charge Mr. Shaw with constitutional obtuseness, however, may find themselves confounded on discovering the eagle-eyed keenness of his perception as he takes Mr. Arthur to task for "the transparent fallacy in his argument" bearing upon the nature of Concurrent Endowment. Between a Government on the Continent endowing schools in which *all sorts of religions are taught*, and our own Government endowing schools which *teach all sorts of religion*, Mr. Arthur professed to see no essential difference! But here, says Mr. Shaw, is "a transparent fallacy in Mr. Arthur's argument," for, while on the Continent the French Government is absolutely indifferent as to what religions are taught in

the schools endowed, in England the Government takes no notice whatever of any religion which may be taught in the schools it endows! Therefore, says Mr. Shaw, in effect, on the Continent, where the nature of the religion taught in the schools is a matter of absolute indifference to the Government, *it is Concurrent Endowment*, but in England, where the Government is practically indifferent as to the nature of the religions which the schools may teach, *it is not Concurrent Endowment*! A mind possessed of metaphysical subtilties sufficiently keen and piercing not only to split such a hair as this, but to show the essential difference which exists between the two halves, cannot be charged with the uniform infirmity of misconception?

Should Mr. Shaw contend for his own words as being that, in connection with our own Government "there are no Denominational Inspectors, nor are they allowed to inquire into the teaching of religion, but are expected to keep out of their reports all allusion whatever to the subject," whereas, on the Continent, where Concurrent Endowment does obtain, "the Government does not trouble itself as to what kind of religion, but it pays the schools as teachers of religion!" what practical difference does this show to exist between the two? Have they there Denominational Inspectors any more than we have? Mr. Shaw himself answers, *No*, when he admits that "the Government does not trouble itself as to what kind of religion is taught." Yet again, when those schools are officially inspected, are not the Inspectors (if indeed they have any) as fully as in our own case, "expected to keep out of their reports all allusion whatever to the subject of religion?" For Mr. Shaw to add

that the Government pays those schools as teachers of religion is, we think, to affirm what he cannot clearly prove. For any Government to pay *expressly* and directly for the teaching of a religion about which they are absolutely indifferent, and do not take the trouble of inquiring into, is a thing so *extremely improbable* and unreasonable, that the man who urges it as an argument against an opponent ought to be prepared to sustain the alleged fact by such proof as we apprehend Mr. Shaw has not at command. Admitting that satisfactory proof of the existence of such a flagrant inconsistency, could be produced however, it would simply amount to what was so well expressed by Mr. Arthur, "that while the French endowed the system all round about, they acknowledged that it was Concurrent Endowment, while English Denominationalists endow all round, and say it is not so."

For Mr. Shaw to attempt to deny the identity of principle and of practical issue involved in French and English Denominationalism, and to deny it on the ground of such a wretched quibble, is not likely to further his cause. It reminds one forcibly of the Quaker's quibble, who, on being solicited for a subscription towards the erection of a new parish church on the same site as that on which the old and dilapidated church was yet standing, replied with characteristic gravity, "Thee knows, friend, that my principles will not allow me to aid in building a parish church, but didst thou not say thou wouldst have to pull down the old one first? then thou canst put me down one hundred pounds for that!" We may suppose the Quaker's conscience was perfectly satisfied with this ingenious but ridiculous whim; the parish

priest was equally satisfied, for the erection of the church was materially assisted by the Quaker! Mr. Shaw's principles, we presume, will hardly allow him to accept Concurrent Endowment under that name, but he is perfectly willing to give and take, for the teaching of all kinds of religion, if you only allow him to deny that this is Concurrent Endowment. He does not like the scent of the poppy *under that name*, but if you present it to him under the name of a *rose*, he will regale his olfactories with it to your heart's content, and be the while profoundly insensible to its characteristic odour, and its soporiferous properties.

Most regretfully has it been mourned over by Wesleyan Denominationalists "that that unfortunate debate in Conference on the Education question ever took place, because," say they, "it is likely to introduce party politics, and to diffuse the political spirit amongst brethren." How or why it should do this, to any detrimental extent, we confess ourselves utterly unable to see; but inasmuch as these gloomy forebodings have emanated from the Denominational side, we cannot forbear to notice, that throughout the entire debate in Conference no one attempted to give it directly political bearings but Mr. Shaw himself. He, as a Denominationalist, most wantonly threw down the gauntlet which the Conference was too indulgent to rebuke, and the Unsectarian portion of it too wise and peacefully disposed take up.

The following is the passage from Mr. Shaw's speech, which we would commend to the consideration of those Denominational brethren who, by anticipation, are mourning over the political complications in which the debate is likely yet to involve the Wesleyan Connexion.

"It is further said on the paper," said Mr. Shaw, "that the Denominational System is favourable to the interests of Popery in this country and in Ireland. Now what has the *Liberal Party* done on the question of Popery, when there was a great agitation in favour of the disestablishment of the Irish Church? When that Act was at length accomplished, it involved amongst other things the handing over, in hard cash and real property, something like a million and a half of money to Romish priests in Ireland. Well, what did the *Liberal Party* say about it," &c. What need or right Mr. Shaw had to drag party politics into this discussion in the Wesleyan Conference, we must leave to his advocates to find out; but, should the Education question in Methodism be by and bye warped by the interests of party politics, Wesleyan Denominationalists must remember that their champion, Mr. Shaw, was the first in headquarters to set the example.

Mr. Shaw is naturally a man of a kindly and generous disposition, but like many others, it would appear as though he has not complete control over his spirit and feelings when he launches out into a political current. No sooner has he done so in his speech now under review, than, unlike the urbanity of his usual self, he turns with little less than a cruel sarcasm upon those who merited, and had a right to expect, nothing but his highest respect, deepest sympathy, and practical support, in their manful and Christian struggles against an overwhelming force of organised evil in priest-ridden Ireland.

The Irish Conference, the daughter of the British, had already with upturned eyes, and outstretched arms, implored her parent to afford her what protection she could

against the aggressions of an insatiable and a truculent Papacy in the land of her nativity ; and already had the parent pledged her word to that daughter, that in this unequal conflict she might rely upon all the moral and practical help she could command. In these circumstances it is that Mr. Shaw, turning upon the representative children of that helpless suppliant, taunts them with having allowed in Ireland *what they were utterly powerless to prevent*, and, while wishing to tie the parent's hands in such a manner as that she shall be unable to render any aid whatever to her oppressed and threatened offspring, unfeelingly asks the latter to undo, in their own strength, the existing evils of Popery in Ireland before they ask the parent Conference to redeem her pledge and do her duty ! Such an aggravating taunt, so exultingly thrown in the face of imploring helplessness, is worthy of a more heartless and a less humane and Christian man than William Shaw. From taunting, Mr. Shaw proceeds to complain of being taunted. "We are taunted," exclaims Mr. Shaw, "with being in the same boat with Romanists. I want to know what kind of crew we have in the boat on the other side ! Why, we see Atheists, Deists, Socinians, Unitarians (?), and Communists, and people of that stamp."

Well now, not to notice the redundancy of the above enumeration, which is but a trifle, we are forced to ask, Does Mr. Shaw really understand what he is speaking to and dealing with ? Is it, again, a pure and simple misapprehension of Mr. Arthur's position ? Or is it an artful attempt to dust the eyes of an audience by sophistry ? Can Mr. Shaw have forgotten that he rose in Conference to oppose Mr. Arthur's motion ? Can he

possibly be ignorant of the fact that in the "boat" which Mr. Arthur presented to the Conference for acceptance was found no trace whatever of either Atheist, Deist, Socinian, or Communist, but simply God's Word? On the other hand, is it conceivable that Mr. Shaw should be so unfair as wilfully and deliberately to misrepresent an opponent's principles and position for the sake of an apparent and a momentary triumph over what has no existence in matter of fact? We cannot think so, but no more can we satisfactorily account for Mr. Shaw's turning Iconoclast upon images of his own creation, while covertly representing them to be actual and formidable foes hiding under the shadow of Mr. Arthur's wing. The most charitable solution of the problem will probably be found in the supposition that Mr. Shaw's speech was already cast in the mould, and in the speaker's mind had assumed its die-like form, from which no departure could be made in the uncoiling process.

To adopt another figure, Mr. Shaw seems previously to have prepared his service of dishes in anticipation of somewhat more vexatious guests than sat down at his board, and having specially cooked this tart morsel, could not forbear to serve it up and deal it out, however unsuitable and out of season. Having done so, and therein perhaps done his best under the circumstances, Mr. Shaw, deeming it probable that some bitter complaints might be made about the unsavoury and unseasonable character of the dish, forestalls the complainers by an indirect apology. He was gratified to find that Mr. Arthur and Company had not brought the Birmingham League with them to table, but this, like most of Mr. Shaw's palliatives, was after the damage had been done, after the acid had

been spurted wantonly in the eyes of the innocent, and seems to have been intended more as a shield for defence against richly merited retaliation or chastisement, than as a reparation for injury inflicted.

But Mr. Shaw, however, widely wandering, comes to the point at last, and proceeds to state certain "reasons why the Conference"—mark it—" *should not discuss the question*" brought forward in Mr. Arthur's Resolution, nor deliver any opinion upon it. Here is Mr. Shaw's declared intention to crush liberty of speech and freedom of discussion in the Conference! We can only accept at Mr. Shaw's hands the will for the deed, and inform him that the morning is now too far advanced, and the light that shines, too clear, for any hole and corner policy of this kind to be adopted by the Wesleyan Conference, whether in relation to this or any other subject, when once placed fairly and openly in its hands.

Mr. Shaw's first reason for putting the gag in the mouth of the Conference on this subject is, "because the *adoption of it* would put us out of harmony with the vast majority of the nation." This, in the first instance, is equivalent to saying that, in this view, the question only required to be fairly and fully discussed, in order to its being adopted by the Conference, and is, consequently, a large admission in favour of the reasonableness and justice of Mr. Arthur's Resolution. But what about this majority difficulty? "It would put us out of harmony with the vast majority of the nation!" Here Mr. Shaw—we do not say in spirit and practice, but in *logical argument*—is swayed, and wishes to sway the Conference and the Wesleyan Connexion by the consideration of what shall be *most popular*, rather than what is right in itself and safe

in tendency. But yet, again, as to the alleged fact itself. That by the adoption of Mr. Arthur's Resolution we should put ourselves "out of harmony with the vast majority of the nation." This may be fairly called in question; and, certainly, Mr. Shaw has not even attempted to give anything in support of his assumption. If he wishes to be understood as doing so, when he refers to the "Manchester Conference of Nonconformists, and the Birmingham League," he must be reminded that Mr. Arthur's Resolution is essentially different from the policy struck out by both; and is much more likely to command the respect and secure the adherence of a Christian nation than the projects of either.

Mr. Shaw ought further to be reminded that his habit of thus confounding and blending things which essentially differ, whether arising from undue smartness or unavoidable infirmity—while it may prove very convenient in serving a purpose for the passing moment—is not likely to advance the interests of truth, nor yet to redound to Mr. Shaw's glory and honour in the long run.

Mr. Shaw, however inconsistent in logic, is undoubtedly consistent in his soul and intention; and, therefore, however much he may err in judgment as to what "inconsistency" is in certain connections, he most consistently objects, in the second place, to the alleged "inconsistency" of adopting Mr. Arthur's Resolution: "Because," he says, "it would involve us in great inconsistency." The facts of the case presented by Mr. Shaw in support of this view, are figures and hard cash amounting to £60,000 per annum, which we are receiving in this country in aid of our Wesleyan schools. "Are we, then," asks Mr. Shaw, "to pass an opinion in opposition to the very

system that gives us money?" We answer, yes, and with perfect consistency, if we find that that system is being converted into an instrument of oppression which threatens our religious liberty, and is likely to be more and more prostituted to a system of salaries and rewards for the propagation of the most deadly error with which the Christian Church or the truth of God can be assailed! We are not only bound by consistency itself, but by every other consideration which is sacred, *at once* to renounce all connection with, to free and wash our hands entirely clean of such a system, and, instead of accepting, as Mr. Shaw would advise, a sixty thousand pounds bribe to enjoined silence, fling that offered bribe indignantly in the face of those who would present it on such degrading and insulting conditions.

That we are by any law of consistency bound *at once to renounce our grants* because we oppose a system that is being, and likely to be, abused and prostituted to the vilest and most dangerous of purposes, we do not clearly see. Did we ever accept this money, *e.g.*, on condition that, under no circumstances whatever would we raise our voice against the Denominational System? The idea is simply monstrous. Who then is he that shall come forward and attempt to bind and gag us by posterior conditions, to which we never consented? which, in fact, had no existence, either actual or implied, in any engagements into which we ever entered? Will Mr. Shaw attempt it? Then we call upon him to consider his false and untenable position, and to withdraw from it without delay.

Did either consistency or justice shut us up to one of two courses; either to give up our Government grants

at once, and then oppose the Denominational System, or to take the money and keep eternal silence; we should have no hesitation in rejecting Mr. Shaw's advice to accept the latter, and in opposition to his counsel, give up the money at once, and, as an independent and free people, resist the evils of Denominationalism with all our heart and soul, with all our mind and strength.

We fearlessly proclaim to Mr. Shaw, his Denominational brethren, and the world at large, that *Wesleyan Methodism cannot and will not* be bribed or gagged for any pecuniary consideration under heaven! Let our £60,000 go at once and for ever, if justice or consistency demands it, because we speak out; but let no man, either friend or foe, insult the Connexion which bears *John Wesley's name*, by telling it to take the money as its reward for maintaining silence upon the State Endowment of Popery and Infidelity, to the utter corruption of God's truth, and the destruction of civil and religious liberty in the nation!

Be it borne in mind, however, that the nation is *divided*: is, in fact, in a *transition state*, in relation to the Education question.

Be it further borne in mind that, as if with the express view of adapting itself to this divided state of the nation, the Legislature has so framed the recent Act that, whether we continue on the Denominational, or array ourselves on the National and Unsectarian side, we are equally in harmony with the provisions of the Act. We maintain, therefore, that we can, with perfect justice and consistency, openly, and as a Connexion, declare ourselves in favour of a National and Unsectarian System of Education with the Bible, under a School

Board ; and, with other Nonconformists, go hand in hand in resisting the Denominational principle, while still retaining our grants for the support of our existing schools, UNTIL the Government is prepared to take them off our hands on fair and equitable terms.

Where, then, is "the great inconsistency" of which Mr. Shaw speaks? We venture to say that it nowhere exists, save in his own imagination. If Mr. Shaw could prove the contrary, however, then our unhesitating answer is—*let the money go*, we are free men ! We are a free and independent Church, and must neither be gagged nor fettered, in resisting to the very death, the aggressions, and above all, the State Endowment of a God-insulting and nation-enslaving Papacy !

Mr. Shaw's third objection to the adoption by Conference of Mr. Arthur's Resolution, namely,—that "it would stultify all our past declarations," and that "it is in the teeth of everything we have said before on the subject"—is utterly without weight, and altogether unworthy of being noticed by either man or Church, unless it be such as lay claim to infallibility.

His fourth and last objection, relating to the rights of the laity to be consulted before any steps should be taken in the direction indicated is the only one which carried with it even the show of soundness and solidity. *This*, however, did, and Mr. Shaw is entitled to the honour of having brought forward *one reason* for delay, which would bear the test of investigation. Mr. Arthur is among the last of men to rob the laity of Methodism of any of their constitutional rights, however, or to curtail intentionally, any of their privileges ; while Mr. Shaw has not always stood forth as the zealous champion of

lay rights and privileges in Methodism. A right thing, however, is better done late than never, and no time can be more convenient for a commencement, than when the one act can serve a double purpose. The adroitness of this stroke was so fully appreciated by Mr. Shaw's co-denominational brethren, that almost to a man, those who followed on the same side, brought forward that gun to the front, and fired it in the face of their opponents when all their other pieces were disabled or useless.

CHAPTER IV.

THE REV. FREDERICK GREEVES.

THE Rev. Frederick Greeves, with great suavity of manner, took it up, and aiming it at the heads of the "*juniors*," "most affectionately urged the younger brethren to weigh the very wise and weighty words of his beloved father, Mr. Shaw, as to the manner in which that Resolution trenched upon the privileges of their lay friends." So much was this new thing—the rights and privileges of the laity—paraded, that Mr. Holland, whose liberal views on this question are well known, with a peculiarly cutting irony, told the Conference that "there had been so much said about consulting the laymen, that he began to feel Conservative, lest lay delegation to the Conference should be coming too fast!" Who can blame a drowning man for clutching at any passing straw which may come within reach, however? The very effort tends to bear him upward, and if not to save him, yet to delay the final act of sinking. In such circumstances a moment is precious, and delays are no longer dangerous.

Mr. Greeves who, according to his own confession, was forced into the arena of debate purely out of compassion for the "Chiefs of the Education Department," who, without his help, would have been left to stand alone—after wishing to bring down the sainted Thomas Vasey from above, proceeded to point out the track in which others were to follow, as to the alleged vagueness

of Mr. Arthur's Resolution. Mr. Arthur's judicious refusal to answer two, as the beginning of an endless series of questions, which could only have had the effect of diverting the mind from the main principle of the Resolution and dividing the Conference upon a host of details—was magnified, distorted, and perverted in its significance: invested with a mysterious meaning, with ominous foreshadowings; was nibbled at with piscine-like caution, because of the fatal hook which it concealed, was tremblingly approached, awfully receded from, apprehensively viewed in the distance, boggled at, surrounded, peered into for its hidden sting, unveiled, touched, turned over, elevated, and exhibited as a bugbear, by one speaker after another, with a gravity which one would think must have been extremely ludicrous to Mr. Arthur, who knew its simple, its harmless import and intention!

The first impression made upon our minds by Mr. Greeves' deliverance is one affecting the amazing tenderness, susceptibility and sensitiveness of his conscience. If Mr. Arthur's Resolution "simply means the reading of the Bible without explanation or instruction, then I say that touches *my* conscience," said Mr. Greeves. To this we unhesitatingly reply, so much the worse for the conscience. The Christian man who, while professing to believe that the Bible contains the only sufficient rule of faith and practice, turns round and declares that his conscience would be wounded by that Bible's being simply read in the day schools of our land, proclaims aloud the morbosity of that conscience; and the essentially erroneous or defective views which he holds in relation to the cardinal principles of his

Protestant faith. As a sick man he ought to be cared for with the utmost tenderness which the circumstances of the case will admit, but by no means at the risk of sacrificing the health, the well-being and life of the entire community.

The principle so rashly laid down by Mr. Greeves, and still more rashly reiterated by others who followed him,—that the simple reading of God's Word without note or comment is not calculated to impart religious instruction,—is essentially *Popish in its nature*, is a stultification of all the exhortations which are addressed from the Christian pulpit touching the reading of the Scriptures; and is a direct and impious insult offered to the Son of God Himself, who, unquestionably had no reference whatever, either to Jewish Talmud or Targums, and less still to the oral glosses of contemporaneous Rabbins, or Cabbalists, when He exclaimed, "*Search the Scriptures*, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me!" Our Lord meant simply the unadulterated Word of Divine inspiration without note or comment, from Pharisee, Priest, or Scribe. The authority of the simple text of God's Truth, the Son of God invariably upheld; its power to impart instruction in righteousness He plainly and frequently taught; while the comments of the recognised teachers of that day—who after all were not more unsafe or pernicious guides than are the majority of those who are entrusted with "the religious instruction" of the young in the schools of this land at the present day—Christ as conspicuously impugned and condemned.

Is Mr. Greeves ignorant of the important part which,

as an enlightener of the human mind, the Scriptures without note or comment played in bringing about the Protestant Reformation, which has been the glory and salvation of our land for the last three hundred years? Is he ignorant of the fact that even detached portions of the Bible silently circulated among the masses, dropped by martyrs on their way to execution, or flung among the multitudes by other hands; on being read without the aid of any human interpreter, contributed mightily to that flood of true religious light which soon deluged our own as well as Continental nations, chasing Popish darkness, superstition and tyranny from our midst? From being once so powerful, then, will Mr. Greeves inform us by what radical change in the Word itself, or in the constitution of the human mind, the simple reading of the Bible has become so ineffectual and impotent for good at the present day? Rather will he, or any other who thinks with him, prove that it is so? We fearlessly challenge the proof, and plainly tell him that he cannot meet it.

Is Mr. Greeves prepared to affirm that that glorious institution of our land, "The British and Foreign Bible Society," is based upon an essential fallacy? that the money required to carry it on is money wasted? that the translation and circulation of millions of copies of the Scriptures in which men, without human interpreter, may read in their own tongue wherein they were born the wonderful works of God—is a gigantic hallucination, a lavish waste of time and labour? Yet to say that the simple reading of the Bible in the day school touches and wounds his conscience, is in effect to affirm all this, and something more and something worse! Let not the fact

be any longer concealed then, that the Christian man who talks thus, however unwittingly, is going hand-in-hand with those Popish sappers and miners of God's Truth who attach more importance to what "the Church" says, than what the Bible teaches, and who put their sacerdotal comments and interpretations before the wisdom and the verities of God. Than this, nothing can be a more unqualified condemnation of the Denominational System of Education. Its intoxicating, infatuating and truth-perverting power over the judgment and conscience of even truth-loving minds, shows it to be a system so dangerous to the best interests of the individual, the Church, and the nation, as to be utterly unfit to live!

"We have been accustomed," says Mr. Greeves, "to speak of the vital importance of pure dogmatic teaching." Yes, "in the jargon of our Sectarianism," as has said the sainted Dr. Dixon, we have been accustomed so to speak; but it is high time that, as far as the children in our day-schools are concerned, we had accustomed ourselves both to think and speak otherwise, and so manifest a more creditable knowledge of human nature than the drilling of children into "some metaphysical, crabbed dogmas of theology, which neither they nor their teachers can in the least degree comprehend"—implies. Mr. Greeves, on the contrary, however, "Cannot think that the Methodist body has so far forgotten this;" namely, "the vital importance of *pure dogmatic teaching*," of which "they have been accustomed to speak—as to say (observe it) that we will *give up all instruction*, and say that we will have the Bible simply read."

Here, then, is the plain, undisguised Popish principle

virtually laid down, that the text of the Bible is nothing, the *interpretations* of the *authorised teachers of the Church everything!* O, how deeply we have drunk out of the Popish cistern without knowing it! So that, as naturally as we breathe, the anti-Scriptural, God-dishonouring arguments of the Papacy are resorted to whenever we attempt to defend the Denominational System.

In the name of Almighty God, we solemnly protest against Wesleyan ministers uttering, as their own, the sentiments of the Vatican, and against the system which requires such anti-Scriptural and essentially Popish arguments for its defence.

Mr. Greeves could not imagine for what purpose Mr. Arthur could wish to retain our training colleges, if our day-schools were to be handed over to a School Board. We are sorry to find Mr. Greeves in this matter so short-sighted. Would it be a matter of no consequence to the Wesleyan body to have the demand for teachers in the nation largely supplied by men trained in our own Colleges, in whose moral and religious character we could repose confidence, apart entirely from Sectarian views? Would it be all the same to Mr. Greeves whether School Board schools were taught by Infidels, Ritualists, or Wesleyans? or, rather, would he prefer the two former to the latter, seeing that he would be willing to part with the Wesleyan colleges, if the Wesleyan schools are to be merged or transferred? If there be any accuracy in the statements of the Revs. W. O. Simpson and Benjamin Gregory, as to the power of Ritualists and Infidels, by an alteration in the tone of voice, or a studied grimace, to change the entire meaning of a chapter—surely that ought to be answer sufficient to Mr. Greeves as to the

importance of Mr. Arthur's wish to retain, and even extend the efficiency of our training colleges.

Mr. Greeves seems to have a very choice acquaintance with Wesleyan teachers, for he knows the best of them, and has heard it again and again from the lips of such, "that they would rather beg their bread than be sent to teach in schools where they were simply to read the Bible and not to explain it." This, we presume, must be set down as flourish on the part of the teachers, if not also on the part of Mr. Greeves; or, it may be strongly suspected that he here employs that peculiar figure of speech by which the best of any class is put for those who hold the most extreme views on the speaker's side!

Tested by merit, we will not presume to have the acquaintance of only the best of Wesleyan teachers, yet we do say that we know *good teachers*, not a few in the Wesleyan Church, who *do not hold with Mr. Greeves*, nor *his staff* of superlatives!

Mr. Greeves having exhausted the subject upon which he was supposed to speak, abruptly takes Dr. Rigg under his wing, and enters into an elaborate explanation and a gallant defence of that brother's conduct, who, as far as we could make out, was not put on his defence by any except his advocate. Mr. Greeves having been once encouraged to come forward as the champion of "the chiefs of the department," could not very well retire to his seat, however, without saying something handsome of the chiefest. To the graceful gallantry of the defence we take no exception, seeing it had no evil consequences. But when Mr. Greeves, speaking "as a witness," declares the Denominationalists of the Connexion to be "*the workers*," and "*vice versâ*," he lays himself and his

testimony alike open to the suspicion of being what we do not wish to characterize; but let us say it—blindly prejudiced. He is, then, in this particular connection a witness groundlessly rash, and on this point utterly unreliable. Had Mr. Greeves confined his accusation within the limits of certain Committees, on which he has sat as a member, we should have simply asked him whether there has never been any attempt made to preclude the possibility of certain men working on the Education Committee, because of the views which they have been known to hold on the Education question? and as to whether it is not, to say the least, disingenuous and unfair to accuse his Unsectarian brethren of *not working*, if their Unsectarianism has been held to be a disability to their sitting on the said Committees? As Mr. Greeves' wholesale and unqualified accusation, however, makes a clean and rash sweep of the entire "*Connexion*," we have further to inform him that there have been, and still are, in "the Connexion," Anti-denominationalists, some of whose faces have never been seen by Mr. Greeves, but who, in carrying on the interests of Wesleyan Education, have both worked as hard and given as liberally as Mr. Greeves has ever done in the past, or is likely to do in the future. So much for Mr. Greeves on *this* question, in his capacity of "a witness."

CHAPTER V.

THE REV. JOSEPH HARGREAVES AND THE REV. G. W. OLVER, B.A.

THE speech of the Rev. Joseph Hargreaves, in support of Mr. Arthur's Resolution, was characterised by such fearless outspoken fidelity to truth and Methodism as the tendencies of the times, the corrupt state of the Anglican Church, its hostility to Methodism, and Methodism's unconscious alliance with it, at once justify and demand. Putting his finger at once on "the disputed point" of the State's right to teach religion, he showed what Mr. Shaw, in his expressed indignation against Mr. Arthur seems to have remained in blissful ignorance of, that the action of the Conference in relation to the Denominational System is justly felt to be a cause of grievance by its numerous Unsectarian members, as implying the recognition and acceptance of the State's right to teach religion, while at the same time proclaiming it to be "a disputed point." "If," said Mr. Hargreaves, "the Conference enforce the acceptance of the right of the State to use its funds to pay for the teaching of religion, it will cause a serious breach in the Connexion; but the Denominational System does appear to us to be the acceptance of that disputed point. To many of us the schools which are kept open for the teaching of religion, and which would be closed at once, if religion was not taught in them—schools maintained in part by

public money—appear to be maintained by the violation of the principle in question.” “The presence of this disputed question in Methodism,” continued Mr. Hargreaves, “in the form of the Denominational schools, is a source of constant irritation and danger to the Connexion.” Pointing out that the effect of the recent Act had been not simply to maintain, but greatly to extend the Denominational System, so as to cover the rural districts of the country with State Church schools, into which Methodist children would be forced wholesale for instruction, under the operation of a compulsory law, Mr. Hargreaves boldly proclaimed that he had “no faith whatever in the Church of England.” “No faith in the doctrines which she taught,” which, for the most part, are essentially Popish, and growingly so from day to day; and no faith in her fairness and integrity, so as to pay any regard to the Conscience Clause wherever she had the opportunity of setting it aside.

Under these circumstances, the working of the Denominational System simply meant the extinction of Methodism in rural districts, and of all Evangelical agencies in large tracts of country. “The summing up” of Mr. Hargreaves’ speech was peculiarly eloquent and effective; but, both towards the close and throughout, he spoke like a man whose soul was full of deep and intelligent convictions, and whose aim was not to produce effect by oratory, but to scathe and blast noxious error, by letting in light; to resist injustice and oppression by incontestable principles of truth and equity.

Mr. Hargreaves’ hand does not hold the *lance*, but his arm frequently wields the sledge hammer with telling effect upon principles which will not stand the test of

intelligent scrutiny, and never with more manifest effect, perhaps, than in his speech in the Conference against the Denominational System with its pernicious tendencies. On the other side, there was no attempt made to defend it. Its practical advocates manifestly felt themselves to be in an evil case, and could only complain that their pet system was being so severely attacked, seeing that from their youth up they had been accustomed to speak of it as a good one!

The speech of the Rev. G. W. Olver, B.A., is mainly occupied with a statement of facts, and (however unintentional on Mr. Olver's part) of such facts as bear most importantly upon the question, but by no means favourably on the Denominational side of it. Had Mr. Olver been on the Unsectarian side, his *facts* would have had considerable weight in support of Mr. Arthur's Resolution, and in encouraging his brethren to *press* for the overthrow of the Denominational principle; but how much more so, when the facts are accepted as *admissions* from Mr. Olver at the very moment he is contending for Denominationalism! Had the deliverances of some of his seniors preceded that of Mr. Olver, he would hardly, we presume, have piled up his *historic facts* in the teeth of their sentiments and theories, as he unwittingly has done, by coming before them. As matters stand, our difficulty is to comprehend *their* unconscious temerity in presenting as arguments what absolutely could not be accepted without previously making Mr. Olver out to have been in error; without accepting at the same moment the proposition, that Mr. Olver was "dependent upon his imagination for his facts," and, as such, unreliable. What are the facts which Mr. Olver brings forward? "That," in the past,

“the cry for the Conscience Clause was raised by *the Methodists*, and that the battle of the Conscience Clause was *fought out by the Methodists*, and that no one else ever took the trouble to lift a voice in their behalf until they had been fighting the battle year by year.” “This he (Mr. Olver) *knew* full well.” That “if to-day there was a Conscience Clause in the Education Act which guarded the Sabbath right of their children, and not merely the question of day-school education, it was because they (the Methodists) had fought the battle as a people and as a ministry, and had won it!” “That the Methodists had ever had a pathway, an encampment, and a flag of their own, which he need only go into the history of the united Committees to prove.” In giving this history, Mr. Olver related several other telling facts, going to show how effectually the Wesleyans had brought their power to bear upon the Government to the extent of numerous concessions being made to them in the framing of the Education Bill; but, as we are not privileged to sit on these committees, we may not obtrude ourselves by following Mr. Olver into the secret sessions. Strange that, after all this somewhat confident boasting of the power of Wesleyan Methodists to affect the Government and the legislation of the country, we should in the same debate be told by several of Mr. Olver’s co-Denominationalists that, in the event of Mr. Arthur’s Resolution being adopted by the Conference, we should find ourselves *utterly unable* to influence the Government in the direction of a National System of Education. This must surely be, because such men as Dr. Rigg and Mr. Olver, in this new course, would not be found willing to seek “private” interviews with Mr.

Gladstone! Possibly, however, the real explanation of such inconsistent cavilling will be found in the fact, that the Denominationalists, unable to bring argument to bear in favour of their system, have deemed it the next best thing to assail the system indicated by Mr. Arthur's Resolution with the utmost powers of sophistry, or whatever else might have the sound of plausibility for the passing hour.

It is sometimes amusing, at other times it is somewhat humiliating, to find such able men as some of the advocates of Denominationalism unquestionably are, descending to the use of such tiny puerilities, such simple trumpery, and effeminate sentimentalism in lieu of reason and sound argument, in their feeble attempts to prop their falling system. Examples of this we shall yet have occasion to notice; but to return to Mr. Olver. After having delivered himself of *his facts*, which some of his Denominational brethren, who succeeded him, found to be rather hard nuts to be cracked by them, and, therefore, quietly discarded them, as not suited to their purpose—Mr. Olver, like an able detective discovers “a fallacy underlying Mr. Arthur's speech which, to his (Mr. Olver's) mind, is a very painful one.” “If,” he continues, “the carrying of that Resolution would carry with it a united Connexion, then I grant it might be possible for us to take our place *on one side or the other*, and to hold our own,” &c. This, if it means anything, implies that, in Mr. Olver's view of the matter, Methodism hitherto has been on the side of *neither* the *Denominational* nor the *Unsectarian* system, then pray where has it been? Can Mr. Olver tell us?

But again, does Mr. Olver imagine that by *not* passing

Mr. Arthur's Resolution, either he, or all his Denominational brethren combined can "carry a *united Connexion*" on his Denominational side? Does he suppose that either "a united Connexion," or a majority of the Connexion, can be got any longer to favour his Denominationalism? Is he ignorant of the fact that, do what he may, the Connexion is no longer "a united," but emphatically a divided "Connexion," as far as the Education question is concerned? Does he profess ignorance of the fact, that for many years past, with many of his ministerial brethren, and a still larger number of the Wesleyan laity, the Denominational System has, as far as Methodism is concerned, existed *merely on sufferance*? that it has been tolerated, not approved of, endured, not loved? and that for the same period an unconquerable hatred of it, because of its anti-Scriptural and Popish tendency, has grown with their growth and strengthened with their strength: so that it is at this hour a simple impossibility to reconcile them to it? If Mr. Olver is really ignorant of all this, his powers of observation in the body to which he belongs have either been very limited or exercised to poor purpose. Mr. Olver, then, in detecting and bringing to trial Mr. Arthur's supposed fallacy in relation to "a united Connexion," has only exposed his own, or displayed his profound ignorance of the real state of the Wesleyan Connexion at the present day, in relation to the great question with which he deals. We must inform Mr. Olver, therefore, that both in the Wesleyan Ministry and out of it, the Unsectarian *is the growing side*, the Denominational the waning side of the Education question; and that, while in connection with the carrying of Mr. Arthur's Resolution, or some other resolution of a kindred

nature, *there is* the reasonable prospect of carrying as nearly as may be "a united Connexion;" there is on the other hand, not the remotest possibility of carrying "a united Connexion," by an attempted defence, or a longer continuance of the Denominational System!

The speech of the Rev. T. B. Stephenson, although on the Denominational side, carries with it the marks, and fails not to make the impression of transparent sincerity in the mind of its author. His utterances are like those of a man who would fain be found on the Unsectarian side, but who feels compelled by a conscientious sense of duty to throw his influence on the side of Denominationalism. He in effect tells us that his natural inclinations are with his *Undenominational brethren*, and that only a deep conviction of duty leads him to tear himself away from them, and to take his stand on the opposite side in the Education question. Such a man's views demand the utmost respect, and his utterances deserve to be thoroughly weighed by those, from whom a sense of duty constrains him to diverge under such circumstances. We have, therefore, bestowed special care upon the speech of which Mr. Stephenson delivered himself in the Wesleyan Conference bearing upon this controversy, and while admiring the ease and ability with which he expressed himself, the modest and conciliatory character of his spirit and manner; while acknowledging, too, not only the plausibility, but the high degree of probability, attaching itself to several of his prognostications as to how, under given circumstances, the State Church clergy would be likely to act, we are constrained to avow a feeling, not of regret, but of blank and utter amazement to find him not only insensible

to the natural and necessary conclusion of his own premises, but illogically deducing therefrom a conclusion of a diametrically opposite character! Our astonishment here is all the greater as we reflect that Mr. Stephenson, making the most of his experience of a certain class of children, claims to be regarded by his brethren as viewing the question "from the standpoint of a practical educator," and that on questions with which he has a competent acquaintance he is not prone to be to any flagrant extent illogical, as a rule. "I ask myself," says Mr. Stephenson, "for what class of children is recent legislation intended? and there is but one answer to that question. The Act was passed, not to meet the case of the decent and respectable poor, who are already gathered into Denominational Schools (?), it was for the poor and degraded children of parents who neglect their interests both moral and intellectual, for whom such legislation was intended, and the whole of recent legislation has been set in action, in order that there may be no longer in our midst any child who shall be without the advantage of a sound primary education." If we grant Mr. Stephenson all he here asks for, he will find himself more tightly bound down than we apprehend he desires. We have no wish to take extreme advantage here of his exceedingly unguarded thesis. When he affirms that the recent Education "Act was not passed to meet the case of children already gathered into Denominational Schools," we presume he means it was not intended to *benefit Denominational Schools*; this, at all events, is the impression which the words and their connection are naturally calculated to produce in the mind, while, if this is Mr. Stephenson's meaning, he has

manifestly allowed his zeal to out-run his prudence and judgment, as he can neither deny nor be ignorant of the fact that the provisions of the said Act *have largely extended* the Denominational System in this country, and that they have been most partial to the most intensely sectarian part of the community. This is the Denominational side of the Act, and that it *was not expressly designed* as well calculated to benefit *just such schools* as have hitherto been composed of those very respectable children to whom Mr. Stephenson alludes, he will find it exceedingly difficult to prove. Mr. Stephenson, forgetting or ignoring the fact which Mr. Arthur had already pointed out so plainly, that the recent Act has "*two conflicting sides,*" the *Denominational and the National*, speaks of the whole as if it were uniform and undivided, and applies to the Act in its entirety what is only *accurate and true* in relation to the *National side of it!*

This, however, is fatal to Mr. Stephenson's conclusions. If, as he seems to intimate, the design and bearing of the recent Act, as far as Denominationalism is concerned, were to keep Denominational schools in *statu quo*, then that degraded mass of children, for whose exclusive benefit he represents "the whole of recent legislation to have been put in action," is still untouched by Denominationalists, and, in the very nature of the case, *only be reached* by the *School Board Schools*, which the Unsectarian side of the Act has called into existence. This is precisely the class of children taken up and educated by School Board Schools; but Mr. Stephenson will have the goodness to observe that these are the very schools in which, according to his own views, "the

minimum," not "the *maximum*" amount of religious instruction is imparted. Where, then, is Mr. Stephenson's position? And what does his arguing prove? We unhesitatingly answer, that his position is a false one, and his reasoning, if reasoning on this point it can be called, inevitably leads to a conclusion of an opposite nature to that which he so inconsistently endeavours to arrive at. First, arraying himself on the Denominational side, Mr. Stephenson is enamoured with Mr. Forster's Elementary Education Act. It was passed, he assures us, "not for children already gathered into Denominational schools, but for the exclusive benefit of those degraded children whose parents neglect their interests, both intellectual and moral." Further, that the whole of recent legislation was put in action in order that there might no longer be in our midst any child without the advantage of a sound primary education," &c. Mr. Stephenson's language here is utterly unintelligible, if it does not refer *directly* and *peculiarly* to the National side of the Act, and therefore to School Board Schools in opposition to schools of a Sectarian character. He cannot possibly pretend to think that the Denominational System, even, as at present extended, could, to any appreciable extent, reach the case of that numerous and degraded class of children to which he refers, so as to realise such results as he attributes to the working of the existing Act. In order, then, that his language may be intelligible here, we are laid under the necessity of viewing his observations as intended to apply either exclusively or mainly to School Board Schools. Through the existence and multiplication of these alone, and the compulsory attendance at these of those degraded and

outcast children, can Mr. Stephenson's secular results to the full extent be secured. But what next? To his brethren, who are urging that these very schools should be multiplied throughout the country a hundred-fold, "in order that there may no longer be in our midst any child who shall be without the advantage of a sound primary education," Mr. Stephenson gravely turns and warns them to take heed what they do, for if they knew as much as he does, they would scout the idea of any education meeting the case of such children which did not contain, not the minimum, but the maximum amount of Sectarian instruction!! This is beyond expression, inconsistent, ridiculously illogical, and leaves Mr. Stephenson without a foot, or a vestige of solid ground to stand upon. If his idea is that *Denominational schools* are to educate the degraded masses, "so that there shall no longer be in our midst any child without the advantage of a sound primary education," he is the victim of a splendid illusion, and while claiming to be regarded as "viewing the question from the stand-point of a practical educator," exposes himself to the smile of his fellows, as among the most visionary of men!

The utter inability of Denominationalists, even when seconded by Government grants, to overtake or keep pace with the educational necessities of the country in the past, has been the very basis of all recent legislation on the subject, and now they are more unable than ever.

The impracticability, in short, amounts now to a simple impossibility in relation to the future, with rival School Board Schools in operation: and we cannot do Mr. Stephenson the injustice of attributing to him such unreasonably exaggerated notions of Denominationalism as

only the veriest novice could entertain. If, on the other hand, his eye was fixed upon School Board Schools, when he spoke in such admiration of the working of the recent Act, then why has he imposed upon himself, and rendered his logic ridiculous by attempting to inform his brethren "that no education could reach the case of such children as the Act was framed to benefit, which did not contain the maximum amount of religious instruction?" when he *must have known* that in the School Board Schools, which he represents as fully reaching the case of such children, and into which, if educated at all, they must be driven, it is just the *minimum* and *not* the maximum amount of religious instruction which is given! We can only account for this strange incongruity; this apparent ignorance of his true position; this seeming inability to distinguish between what belonged to his own, and what to his opponent's ground; in short, we can only account for such stultiloquence as Mr. Stephenson at this point gave himself over to, by concluding that, after all, it was *his feelings* and inclination which were on the Denominational side: his judgment and conscientious convictions of duty, on the opposite; and that he unconsciously allowed his feelings to play him the trick of warping and beclouding his judgment.

Certain it is that we have seldom found such a specimen of fallacious and self-opposing argument presented with such a self-complacent unconsciousness, as that to which we have been entertained in certain parts of Mr. Stephenson's speech on the Education question.

Mr. Stephenson's mind is naturally too logical to hold both sides of a contradiction, and, therefore, we suggest that, if he has got his speech, either in print or manu-

script, he spend a quarter of an hour on its thoughtful perusal, that, as "a young man," he may learn to save himself, in the future, from those wounded feelings, and that mortification of spirit which a sensible man must always experience on discovering how egregiously he has floundered in argument, and aided those he designed to oppose, through the operation upon his mind of a flagrant fallacy.

CHAPTER VI.

*THE REVS. J. V. B. SHREWSBURY AND
JOSEPH PORTREY.*

THE Rev. J. V. B. Shrewsbury, irreconcilable to the Denominational System, and yet not entirely agreeing with Mr. Arthur's position, wished to recall his Denominational brethren to an important and significant point in connection with their system which they appeared wishful to escape and anxious to fight shy of in this controversy. "Why is it, I ask," said Mr. Shrewsbury, "that Denominationalism has been so earnestly sought by the Church of England? Why is it, again, that Romanism in England and Ireland has come behind, and patting the Church of England on the back, said, 'Go in for Denominationalism?'" This he maintained was a piece of the most suspicious procedure, and he would like his brethren who were so fond of Denominationalism, to look these facts in the face and tell him the meaning of them, and the meaning of their speaking the same language and in relation to the same subject, pursuing the same course as the Romish priesthood! "The Papacy wants, not the Bible, but the priests in its schools," said Mr. Shrewsbury, "and if I am to have the Bible at the expense of having the Popish priesthood paid by the State, I unhesitatingly declare I am prepared to forego the Bible in the school, and to let the Church do its own work."

Considering that Mr. Shrewsbury was almost alone in his peculiar views, as far as the entire exclusion of the Bible from the schools is concerned, his manly independence of thought and speech command our admiration; but considering the numerical feebleness of his position in the Conference; considering that he is as uncompromising an opponent of Denominationalism as Mr. Arthur can be, and with the latter cordially agrees in the main, the prudence which led him in his speech to oppose Denominationalism and Mr. Arthur's Resolution *alternately*, without any hope of success for himself, is something more than questionable.

At this point a motion was made by some of the *Impatients*, that the discussion should abruptly terminate. We hardly dare guess how successful it might have been had not the *Rev. Joseph Portrey* had "a strong feeling on the subject," and claimed his right to express it! We naturally conclude (perhaps it is our weakness and infirmity), that when a man of average intelligence expresses himself as having "a strong feeling" on any subject, it is the result of having carefully studied that subject in all its bearings, and that when he further evinces a strong desire to speak on such a question, he is, at least, going to say something to the point; but hardly does anything, in connection with this controversy, strike, surprise, and solemnly amuse us more than the apparent misconception, the changing position, and the utter irrelevancy which characterise many of the debaters who rise in succession, professedly brimful of matter, but mis-directed to a pointless issue!

Had Mr. Portrey stood alone in these respects, we might have *felt* surprise without expressing it; but the

able company in which he thus stands renders some passing notice of the circumstance an imperative duty.

This singular and significant fact having been already noticed, in relation to some of Mr. Portrey's predecessors, we shall free ourselves from the suspicion of partiality, by directing a little attention to Mr. Portrey himself; and, lest the prominence should in any degree be painful to his feelings, we promise to hide him as much as possible in the centre of the group, by dealing with others who, in the order of discussion, came after him.

Contributing his quota towards the augmented mystery of "Mr. Arthur's reticence," Mr. Portrey proceeds to read "an extract" from the report of a speech delivered by the late principal of the Normal Institution—the Rev. John Scott, on the occasion of the "opening of the Orphan House School, at Newcastle-upon-Tyne," an extract containing sentiments excellent of their kind and in their place, but having absolutely nothing whatever to do with Mr. Arthur's Resolution, which Mr. Portrey came forward professedly to oppose.

The following is the extract with which Mr. Arthur's resolution was so vigorously opposed by Mr. Portrey:—"God's law will be read, for we shall diligently teach sound morals in this school." So would Mr. Arthur! "And we are not so dishonest as to borrow morals from the Holy Scriptures, and not avow our obligation." No more is Mr. Arthur. Mr. Scott adds, "which they must do who teach morals without the Bible;" but this does not apply to Mr. Arthur! "If the morals are good for anything, they must draw them from that source; and it is miserable affectation and insincerity to disown their obligation, and teach good morals as

their own sage discoveries ;" but every word of this, in perfect consistency with his Resolution, would be endorsed by Mr. Arthur! "Neither are we so immoral as to teach moral precepts and obligations on human authority, and with mere human recommendations, where we can adduce the authority of the God of heaven and producing the book, say, Thus saith the Lord." It is against this very "immorality" and human arrogance that Mr. Arthur, like a flint, has set his face, and on this ground is he in heart and soul opposed to Denominationalism, while Mr. Portrey, when he affirms that the mere reading of the Bible in the school will never do for him, is practically, however ignorantly, declaring himself a party to that very "immorality." Methodist preachers and laymen, if not to a man, yet in the overwhelming majority, will join with other Nonconformist Churches in resisting, at all hazards, the continued monopoly, arrogance, and tyranny of the State Church, and the endowment and aggressions of Popery in this country, and if *they cannot* accomplish these objects by securing National Schools in which *the Bible shall be simply read*, then they are prepared to make common cause with those who advocate Secular Schools in the most secular sense, as incomparably the lesser of two evils. Mr. Arthur's Resolution points out the *via media* by which the "dishonesty" and "immorality" of which Mr. Scott has spoken would be avoided, on the one hand, and the heresy and blasphemy of teaching in God's name and on God's authority the doctrine of devils—the infinitely greater evils of Denominationalism—on the other. Mr. Portrey, on the contrary, while professing to endorse Mr. Scott's sentiments is in reality

taking the shortest way to the probable realisation of the very evils which Mr. Scott so earnestly deprecated. But to proceed with Mr. Portrey's "Extract from Mr. Scott's Speech at Newcastle-on-Tyne:" "We leave this folly to those who exclude the Bible from their schools (if indeed such people build schools), and we will diligently instruct the children committed to our care in the law of God." If Mr. Portrey fancied that in all this he was uttering a word in opposition either to Mr. Arthur's Resolution, or the sentiments of Mr. Arthur's brethren, who with heart and soul support it, we sincerely pity him, and much regret that he ventured an opinion upon the subject at all, until he was better informed.

When Mr. Portrey says, "I hold that on Mr. Arthur's *suggestion* we would not teach morals from the law of God," we are at a loss to know to what he refers as far as Mr. Arthur is concerned, and still more at a loss to know what we are to make out of his assertion. We will presume, however, that by "Mr. Arthur's *suggestion*," he means Mr. Arthur's *Resolution*. If so, and we should further give Mr. Portrey credit for understanding that Resolution, then we can only regard Mr. Portrey as re-asserting the Popish dogma, that the mere reading of the Bible cannot teach, and therefore that the Bible without the comments of the Church does not reveal "the law of God!" What is this pernicious Denominationalism reducing us to? In the name of Christian truth and Protestantism we again enter our indignant protest against the essentially false and noxious principle laid down by all the Denominationalists in this discussion, that the reading

of the Sacred Scriptures is nothing, the comments of the Church everything. We now confront Mr. Portrey with Mr. Scott's own words, which it would appear as though he had reproduced on purpose to confound and confute himself: "If these morals are good for anything they must draw them from that source"—the Word of God. Does Mr. Portrey then lay claim to any superiority of mind or special inspiration from heaven in this "*drawing*" or *deducing process* which he denies to others? Does he fancy that either he, or any teacher he can place over a school, can speak more plainly on the law of God, or the great principles of morality than God Himself has done? If he does, will he be good enough to say which of the laws of God, or principles of morality, as found in either Old or New Testament, he could in this respect improve upon? Finally, is he prepared to deny, either that the Spirit of God *cannot or does not*, in connection with the *simple reading of the Bible instruct even "children in the law of God,"* and even in the more distinctive doctrines of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Did we think it at all probable that Mr. Portrey would dream of denying this, we could contradict him by personal experience in childhood, and likewise by the testimony of many biographers in relation to the religious experience in tender years of those whose lives they have written. If Mr. PORTREY *thinks* that the mere reading of the Scriptures is not calculated to instruct even the young, in morality, in the law of God, and even in the great leading doctrines of the Gospel; while he is in harmony with the Papal hierarchy *on some points*, he entirely *disagrees with them in this*; for, it is because

they know the Book of God to be to a large extent its own interpreter, that they *interdict* the reading of it without note or comment, in the case of both old and young within their communion ; while it is with the same understanding that the British and Foreign Bible Society, print, translate, and circulate the Word of God throughout the world.

Alas for the right of private judgment, for the purity of truth, and the security of the souls of men, if Mr. Portrey's theory were true, and if the fatal principle which he lays down were acted upon in this country. The principle that the simple reading of the Bible has no tendency to teach sound morals, or to make known to the reader the law of God, and that we must be indebted to the interpretations of the Church for what we know of these important matters, has only to be accepted and acted upon in order to bring back the palmiest days of Popery to this nation ! But we indignantly repudiate and spurn it as a principle of the most false and anti-Scriptural character. A principle the avowal of which ought to bring the blush of a guilty shame to the cheek of any man who professes to be a Christian. Let it not be marvelled at that in the present day Popery is plucking up heart, and girding up its loins in high hopefulness in this country, when it finds Methodist preachers, however ignorantly, yet ably, advocating its claims, and proclaiming aloud some of its most darling principles. We are afraid of putting Mr. Portrey too conspicuously forward in this discussion, but he has got a style of *insinuating*, what, because of its notorious inaccuracy he *dare not affirm*,—which, while it may pass muster in the heat of controversy, will not

bear examination when viewed in the light of a calm and sober judgment.

Take the following as an example:—"Mr. Arthur a few years ago entered a very strong protest against the Bible being put under a ban in India. I (Mr. Portrey) now enter as strong a protest against a ban being put upon the Bible in England." The insinuation here is that Mr. Arthur having already taken that stand in relation to the Bible in India, now with singular inconsistency advocates the Bible being put under a ban in this country. As an insinuation the covert charge is so palpably inaccurate and unfair, as to merit the severest animadversions, while as a professed argument it is so utterly pointless and irrelevant as to be unworthy of serious notice. It carries us by the law of association to that ludicrous incident connected with the Crimean campaign, when a few puerile heroes who had never seen the battlefield, in the absence of a *real* enemy, sketched an ideal foe with chalk, and most chivalrously lavished their powder and shot upon the creation of their own fancy, under the notion of wounding and slaying the Czar of Russia! The parallel, we admit, does not hold good in all its points, for while the artificial chivalry of the former was rewarded by a few hours in "the lock up," the Wesleyan Conference had forbearance enough to suffer the latter to go unrebuked from the *camisado*.

CHAPTER VII.

THE REV. W. O. SIMPSON.

THE arena of debate is next entered by the Rev. W. O. Simpson, who felicitates himself on the favourableness of his position, and the openness of his mind to both sides of the controverted question! This, indeed, is a rare position for a *debater* to occupy! and withal a little mysterious! In the capacity of a humble learner who wishes to be the convert of whichever party seems to have most truth on its side, we can understand the "mind" being "open to both sides;" but we submit that the period of such *indecision* is most becomingly characterised by a modest silence.

As Mr. Simpson thinks otherwise, however, and rushes into "the thickest of the conflict" to proclaim his indecision, we might have congratulated him upon the novelty of the phenomenon, had he not, by self-gratulation anticipated and forestalled us.

Mr. Simpson having suspended his mind as in a swivel, proceeds to oscillate, and turn from side to side in the most marvellous manner conceivable. Now the equipoise is perfect, and you hear him proposing to deal with the subject, yet, "not looking at the matter on one side or the other!" Presently he bends to Denominationalism, and with the air of a singularly strong suspicion of the extreme subtlety and evanescence of matter, asks, "are we prepared under any name, however soft, to allow our nine hundred schools or more to

disappear into space!" We suggest that the process of so remarkable an attenuation of solids, would be well worth the watching.

Mr. Simpson having turned half-way towards the Denominational side finds his "mind comforted," and encouraged to step fully over, and speaks in tones of gladness of "the attitude taken in the Amendment in reference to the administration of our Education Committees." We are obliged to Mr. Simpson for his information by the way, as we did not before know that "our Education Committees," except in very exceptional cases, possessed either legislative, or, strictly speaking, administrative powers; perhaps it may even yet, be fairly questioned.

Far be it from us to envy Mr. Simpson, therefore, of the crumb of comfort which he was enabled to extract from the class of consideration in which he so ingeniously indulges, especially as he seems previously to have fully shared the suspicion with "rural districts" in relation to "the authorities at Westminster." Well, but when the pendulum has swung its full length to the left, what else can it do but return to the right? and so Mr. Simpson gets into thorough accord, not indeed with Mr. Arthur, but with Mr. Shrewsbury, who, passing Mr. Arthur by in the temperate zone, finds his resting place at the Antipodes of Denominationalism.

Hence, says Mr. Simpson, "I was in India when that cry came out, 'No ban upon the Bible,' and I heard that question discussed at the time by all Denominations. But we in India preferred that the Bible should be kept out of the schools, rather than that it should be taught by men who had the mark of Vishnu or Shiva

upon their foreheads ! Our action in that foreign field was directly in accordance with our action in this country !”

This is at least half a swing of the mental pendulum, away from Denominationalism towards the opposite pole of secular schools in the most secular acceptation of the word ; and Mr. Simpson is still going. The extreme point is at length reached, as Mr. Simpson delivers himself of the following : “ No one has greater reverence for the Word of God than I have, but I think none of you who are familiar with the great amount of Bible knowledge found amongst the people of this country side by side with religious indifference, will be prepared to press very far the innate power of the Word of God. We could, by a certain tone of voice, alter the meaning of a chapter ; we can, by an expression of the face, lend a most comical aspect to the best of our Lord’s miracles ; and I say that, unless the Bible is to be taught by those who love it, you will expose it to the cold and icy teachings of the Secularists, and to the ridicule of men who do not believe in it. If the choice for me was to be between Mr. Arthur’s Bible reading and Secularism, I, for one, would choose the Secular System ; and I feel that I am on safer ground when I apply to the children of the poor the test which I put to my own children.” Having thus far quoted Mr. Simpson, with the view of showing how completely he has veered about from the Denominational to the Secular System, and, consequently, how “ open he (still) keeps his mind to both sides,” while “ not looking at the matter from either one side or the other,” we now propose to notice the strength and soundness of his arguments in what he has already advanced. First, as an argument

against the simple reading of the Bible in day schools, Mr. Simpson urges its inefficiency on the ground that a large amount of Biblical knowledge exists in this country side by side with religious indifference. Did it not occur to him, however, that if the argument has any weight at all, it is not against the simple reading of the Bible in day schools of which there has been as yet but little, and *that* little of recent date; but against the preaching of the Gospel itself, of which there has been much. "The Bible knowledge which is thus found associated with religious indifference," we would remind Mr. Simpson, has been chiefly communicated through the medium of the Christian pulpit of this land. So far the Christian pulpit has done its duty, but is *it* to be saddled with the guilt of the "religious indifference which is found side by side with" this "Bible knowledge?"

Does Mr. Simpson, on the ground of these two being "found side by side," urge the weakness and inefficiency of the preached Gospel, and all other evangelistic agencies at work in the land? or does he venture to advocate their discontinuance on such a ground as that which he has just stated? He does not, and dare not; and with equally little reason on his side, or even show of it, does he on such grounds argue against the simple reading of the Bible in our day schools. But another of Mr. Simpson's powerful arguments against Bible-reading in schools, is that, "We could, by a certain tone of voice, alter the meaning of a chapter; could, by an expression of the face, lend a most comical aspect to the best of our Lord's miracles," &c. To this we reply, that *all* may not be so highly gifted with the power of

facial expression as some with whom Mr. Simpson has personal acquaintance; that as an argument it is as feeble as it is far-fetched, referring, after all, to the possible, rather than the highly probable; and, finally, although the certainty of such an abuse could be proved to a demonstration, it is quite possible that the pupils might feel more disgusted than pleased with such buffoonery, and hear the Word of God speaking like itself, and for itself, when the lapse of years had effaced from the mind every impression connected with *the manner* in which it once was read, save that of the contemptible *silliness* and *impiety* of the low and insipid comedian who had tried to turn it into jest!

Mr. Simpson's idea of "the Bible being taught" in the schools of this country *exclusively* by those who love it, is, of course, singularly impracticable. But, unless you can have it so, says Mr. Simpson, "you will expose it to the cold and icy teachings of the Secularists, and to the ridicule of men who do not believe in it." Well, we presume it has been exposed to, and assailed by, all these since ever it was a Bible, and we don't believe it has taken much harm therefrom as yet, nor need we fear for it in the future. Our chief solicitude ought to be, and is, to take *the professed interpretation of it* out of the hands of Papists and Anglican Jesuits, who, while believing in and loving it no more than *avowed infidels* do, are at present enabled, *under pretence of explaining it*, to instil into the minds of the young the most noxious and anti-scriptural heresies; the most revolting and God-insulting blasphemies! By the simple reading of the Bible in day schools the Word of God speaks for itself, and in this, as an instructor and enlightener of

the human mind, of both old and young, we have unbounded confidence.

Thus it is at once removed beyond the domain of "the icy teachings of the Secularists and the ridicule of men who (professedly) do not believe in it, on the one hand, and beyond the blasphemous perversion of its great truths (in the day school, at least) by certain classes of Denominationalists, on the other. Hitherto Mr. Simpson—since in his last oscillation he swung round from Denominationalism—has been going in for the exclusion of the Bible entirely from the school; but it is now almost time for the pendulum to return again to the side from which it received its impetus. Therefore, says Mr. Simpson, "I will now come back (we thought as much) to the point from which I started (!) Here is a system (Denominationalism) in operation, which in very large towns, to my certain knowledge, is a source of strength and vigour to us. It may be that we do not get many converts direct from our day schools. Of course we do not, but where we have a good day school we have a good Sunday school. We take the basis that a large Methodist congregation has the right—a right which I think Mr. Arthur has not sufficiently contemplated—to educate their own children. And I put it to you, whether you are prepared to forfeit that right, and commit the education of our children to others?"

To Mr. Simpson's "certain knowledge," then, Denominational schools "in very large towns are a source of strength and vigour to us!" Does it occur to Mr. Simpson's mind, that his brethren in great numbers could to their equally "certain knowledge" point to many of our day schools in both large and small towns, which are a

source of weakness and discouragement to us?—a drain upon the financial resources of the Society, a drag and an incubus upon its working power! Mr. Simpson's "certain knowledge" relates unquestionably to what are the exceptions to the general rule in Methodism, and is, therefore, but little worth in the connection in which he brings it forward. But how, let us ask, does Mr. Simpson sustain his assertion, that our day schools in large towns to his "certain knowledge are a source of strength and vigour to us?" Why, he has no sooner committed himself to the proposition, than he admits what is tantamount to the disproof and vitiation of it; namely, that we do not get many converts direct from our day schools! We ask Mr. Simpson, is he prepared to prove that we get twenty per annum out of our nine hundred schools? If he cannot show an average accession to our Church of two converts per annum out of every hundred day schools in the Connexion, and we venture to tell him that he cannot, then, pray, where is his ingenious mind looking, that it finds out that these schools are "a source of strength and vigour to us?" Mr. Simpson's only answer is, that "where we have a good day school we have a good Sunday school!" Our reply to Mr. Simpson is, that this is no answer to our question, and less still is it any proof of his proposition. It is the merest shadow and illusion, inasmuch as in numerous instances we have "good Sunday schools," even *excellent Sunday schools*, both as to efficiency and numbers, where we *have no day schools, never had, and are now not likely to have*. Unsupported by evidence, then, Mr. Simpson's gratuitous assumption falls to the ground, for what it is worth.

"But, then," says Mr. Simpson, "a large Methodist

congregation has a right—a right which Mr. Arthur has not sufficiently contemplated—to educate their own children.” Not denying this abstract right to either large or small Methodist Congregations, we have to inform Mr. Simpson that this *rhetorical dash* is grounded upon several fallacies which must now be exposed. First, it assumes that these “large Methodist Congregations” have the ardent desire and the tenacious determination to support our schools out of pure love of the Denominational principle; and that they would regard it as a grievance, not a relief, to be set free from the responsibility! This, to say the least, needs proof before it can be accepted, and with very strong and general indications which point in an opposite direction, we deny the accuracy of the assumption. Secondly, it assumes that supposing the desire and determination already noticed, to exist in “large Methodist Congregations,” Mr. Arthur’s Resolution would compel them to abandon such support against their wish and will. This is fallacy *number two*. As Mr. Arthur, both in his Resolution and speech in support of it, expressly provided for and clearly pointed out just the contrary, and had Mr. Simpson as “sufficiently contemplated” the terms of Mr. Arthur’s Resolution as Mr. Arthur in framing it, seems to have “contemplated” the right of such “large Methodist Congregations,” he would not have so blundered in his conclusions. Thirdly, it assumes that, where “large Methodist Congregations” *have* day schools “in very large towns,” it is “*their own children*” who are educated there! This Mr. Simpson, if he does not know, *ought to have known, is not the case*, save in a few exceptional instances of an individual character. Such “large

Methodist Congregations" are, as a rule, composed of men and women who are in easy circumstances; not a few of them wealthy, and who send "their own children" to be educated in a higher and more "respectable" class of schools than either our own or other *public elementary* schools are, or from a social standpoint, *can* be considered in the present state of society. The children who are educated in these our day-schools, then, *are not* the children of the "large Methodist Congregations" who support the said schools, but are the children, for the most part, of parents who, alas! are seldom or never found mixing with such fashionable congregations in any form.

These are the facts of the case in relation to our day-schools connected with "large Methodist congregations" in "very large towns," then, as viewed from a practical standpoint, and with a practical eye, and exhibit the third fallacy underlying Mr. Simpson's "*basis*."

In large towns it *is not as a rule* the children of Methodist parents who enter and are taught in our day schools; while in rural districts, where our Methodists are sufficiently poor to be glad to avail themselves of Methodist day schools, if they had them, *there* in the great multitude of cases we have them not, and cannot get them, through the monopoly of the dominant sect! Mr. Simpson's sentimental exclamation then, "Are we prepared to forfeit that right, and to commit the education of our children to others?" is by these facts reduced to something very much like mere sensational flourish, seeing that the education of our children, as a rule, *is already committed* to others. In large towns where *we have day schools* it is committed to others by the right

of parental *choice*, and in rural districts, as a rule, by the force of a stern necessity.

Mr. Simpson having entered this controversy with his "mind open to both sides," and professing "not to look at the matter from one side or the other!" has had, as all may see, a peculiarly difficult part to play, and must have been an abler man than he even is, to have played it, either creditably to himself, or to the satisfaction of either party upon whom he alternately blows hot and cold. As a controversial opponent, his attitude has been as ludicrous as unique, while his aim, if he had any, and what it was, does not yet appear—has been of necessity a signal failure. He has accomplished nil.

Rushing in between the two contending parties (we use the word party in its most friendly sense) with a desire to do something, yet not knowing what, nor which side to espouse, we see him with rather clumsy weapons, first thrusting at the one, and then at the other: with an inconsistency which puzzles both, with a feebleness which injures neither, with an alternation which looks as though he was anxious to know which should eventually prove the strongest, and with such a sensible interruption of the real points at issue, as to justify the wish in the hearts of both parties that he had quietly kept his seat or would now get speedily out of the way.

Mr. Simpson twice complains of pain of mind in connection with this controversy, but, considering the awkwardness of the position in which he voluntarily placed himself, we congratulate him on having at length beaten a retreat without getting more severely wounded by the cross-fire of the contending armies, between which he so needlessly and so objectlessly threw himself.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REV. GIBSON McMILLEN AND DR. RIGG.

IT was now time for Ireland to speak in its own behalf, as Mr. Arthur had confined himself to what would be for the interests of the land of his adoption. The speech of the Rev. Gibson McMillen, who now stepped forward, was therefore directed to the elucidation of the "Irish System," and the correction of the erroneous notions and misapprehensions which exist in relation to it, in the minds of Wesleyan Denominationalists "on this side the water." Mr. McMillen justly complained that these "misapprehensions" had been indicated in "some of the publications" in this country, in which it had been affirmed "that their system in Ireland was more Denominational than the system which (in this country) had been created by the Act of 1870," and which assertions, inasmuch as "the publications" containing them were in Ireland regarded as "the exponents of Methodist public opinion"—were felt to be "prejudicial to their position on the great question of National Education in Ireland." The truthfulness of such assertions Mr. McMillen, in the name not only of the Methodists of Ireland, but of every Protestant there of whatever Denomination, totally and emphatically denied.

Having instituted a comparison between the details of the two systems, and pointed out the injurious and ruinous effects to truth and Protestantism, which would inevit-

ably ensue by the introduction of the present English System into his native country—Mr. McMillen conclusively refuted the assertion that their “Irish System is more Denominational than that created by the Act of 1870,” by pointing to the fact that “the Roman Catholics are the greatest opponents of the Irish System, because it is not sufficiently Denominational for them; and that they show the most deadly hatred to their model schools.” “These schools,” said Mr. McMillen, “are from day to day and from week to week denounced from the Popish altars, and even the Sacrament has been denied to parents for having sent their children to them.” Here is a problem for Dr. Rigg and all similar Denominational theorists to solve, before reiterating the assertion to which reference has been already made. Whatever may be said about the vileness of the Popish System, Dr. Rigg cannot make us believe that for themselves and the interests of that system, Popish priests and Jesuits are fools! To give them justice, they are consummately astute, far-seeing, vulture-eyed men, who grasp the compass and bearing of great practical questions much more fully and readily than even Dr. Rigg does; and of all men they are the least likely to stand in their own light, to mistake a friend for a foe, and systematically and openly, and from year to year, maintain a position of deadly hostility towards anything which is favourable to the accomplishment of their dark designs. The fact that “the Irish System” is by the Papal hierarchy thus resisted, hated, and denounced, is a fact sufficiently strong and significant to overturn a hundred such theoretic notions and assertions as Dr. Rigg and others have entertained and expressed in relation to the Denominational character of

that system. By the way, too—but let it be stated quietly—the same class of disproof of such assertions has been afforded by the very men who make them. Dr. Rigg and others of his Denominational brethren are always flying and pecking at the *Irish System* as a speckled bird. If it can be dragged into any discussion, in which Dr. Rigg takes an active part, he is sure to bring it forward; while the dislike and the animus felt towards it are rendered most conspicuous and apparent, alike by the hard things said about it and the manner in which they are spoken. Now, why all this from ultra-Denominationalists, if what they say of this system be true, that “it is more intensely Denominational than is the system at present in operation in England?” Why then not take part with your friends? Why not be self-consistent, and urge the *extension* of *this* system in Ireland, instead of the ill-concealed hatred of it which incessantly crops up and oozes out, in the thinly-veiled taunts and sneers which are directed towards it as often as even the shadow of an opportunity presents itself? These queries will suggest their own answers to all impartial minds.

When Mr. McMillen informed the Conference assembled in the “City Road Chapel,” that while Methodists in Ireland duly valued the religious element in day schools, “yet, if they were driven to the alternative of accepting Denominationalism or a Secular System, he was prepared to say that they, and the Protestants of Ireland generally, would vote for the latter alternative, rather than *that* which would allow the Romish Hierarchy to have the public funds at their disposal, to propagate Popery, establish Popish ascendancy, and destroy the Protestantism of Ireland—he expressed what found

a responsive chord in the soul of nine out of every ten of the eight hundred Wesleyan ministers who listened to his voice; and, well persuaded we are that facts will shortly show the laity of English Methodism to be in perfect keeping with this clerical proportion.

The Rev. Joseph Lawton having put in an appearance said just sufficient to indicate his opposition to the Denominational System, and then withdrew, intimating the importance of his work and the smallness of his pay!

The Rev. James Rigg, D.D., having waited long, possibly until the opposition side should have done its best, at length appears in sight, with his reserve forces, like another Blucher at Waterloo; and, true to the instincts of his nature as the needle to the pole, almost at once plunges headlong into "*the Irish System!*" Having unlimbered his artillery of "the latest returns"—"with the rules in his hand," together with "Irish reports and Irish correspondence," his acknowledged "perpetration of an epigrammatic fallacy"—"the Resolutions which were passed by our united Committees in 1870." "An Irishman's words," "The Rev. James Tobias," "The proposition of Mr. Rogers, who talks about 'ladies with a vocation;'" his "recommended careful study of the Rev. T. Binney's pamphlet on this point;" his "friend Mr. Stephenson"—"the old landmarks of his liberalism;" "All that belongs to the ancient traditions of the Reformation;" "The memory of John Knox;" "The name of Archbishop Murray;" "Archbishop McHale;" "The history of Father O'Keeffe;" and other sundry pieces, whose names are miscellaneous enough to suit, and numerous enough to fill a "contents sheet" of *The Times*, but whose metal withal in numerous

cases is too heterogeneous to form a good amalgam, so as to be safe to shoot with—Dr. Rigg, regardless of the risk, makes his last grand attack upon the obnoxious Irish System, as if bent upon its annihilation.

Should the question be asked, what bearing had all this farrago upon the questions raised by Mr. Arthur's Resolution and Mr. Shaw's Amendment? it ought to be remembered that Dr. Rigg is not slavishly bound down to any given point or subject when he undertakes to speak from the floor of the Wesleyan Conference, or to write in the correspondence columns of semi-official journals! Endowed by nature with a loquacity which some might envy; enriched with "an almost fatal fluency," and not entirely destitute of "the art which hides a conscious weakness in his theme, and to the superficial shows it, seeming strong," his orations, by "those who are led by the ears" especially, are usually listened to with patience; although their length and frequent vagueness are somewhat trying to the passive graces of the most intelligent part of his audience. If in the present instance we do not choose to follow Dr. Rigg closely, and quote him lengthily, especially in the earlier parts of his long oration, it is simply because, apart from the manner in which he has handled the subject—which is characteristically prolix—the *subject itself is utterly irrelevant to the great questions raised by the Resolution and Amendment.*

It was perfectly in place for Mr. McMillen to ask the Conference not to decide upon any policy in connection with this great question, which would have the effect of extending the Denominational principle in Ireland. Perfectly in order for him to point out how the intro-

duction of our present English system to his native island would be adverse, pernicious, and even ruinous to the interests of truth and Protestantism in that land. It would, too, have been perfectly in order for Dr. Rigg to have attempted, however unsuccessfully, to show that the provisions of the present English Act, although applied to Ireland, would not prove prejudicial to the interests of truth and Protestantism, had he chosen to do so. But we submit it was altogether irrelevant, totally out of order, out of keeping and character for Dr. Rigg to enter upon an elaborate examination of the *Irish System*, with the view of proving that it was more Denominational than the system created in this country by the Act of 1870! What although Dr. Rigg in this attempt had been perfectly successful? a point, nevertheless, which is not conceded, and was never perhaps further from being conceded than now. What although he had proved to a demonstration that the Irish National System is, *denominationally as pernicious* as, or even more noxious than our own? Did it ever suggest itself to the Doctor's mind, that "*two blacks make one white?*" and unless he was prepared to demonstrate this also, "What could his arguing prove?" Had the practical point for once presented itself to Dr. Rigg's mind, that the great question with Irish Methodists and Protestants generally *is not* what the Irish System *has been or even is*, but what *it is to be under a new Act*, he must at once have perceived the hollowness of his position, and of his oratory; he must have felt that he was solemnly wasting the time of the Conference for no higher purpose than to show to a few of his admiring brethren how familiar he was, although "not an Irishman," with "Irish Reports and

Irish Correspondence," and how well he was posted up in Irish school statistics! This understood, we confess to a feeling of mingled regret and amusement on discovering how such a thoroughly practical mind as Dr. Rigg's ought to be, has, in connection with this discussion, gratified and entertained itself with the nugatory; the manifest zest and delight with which it has revelled in the impractical and irrelevant.

This is not the first time since 1869 that Dr. Rigg, with the same breathless result as when a man vigorously beats the air, has tackled the statistics of Irish Schools, "Irish Reports and Irish Correspondence," &c., with the view of persuading Irish Methodists and Irish Protestants generally that, despite their observation and experience to the contrary, the "Irish National System" of Education is more Denominational and *pro-Romish* than that which obtains in England! Through congeniality, therefore, as well as through "having his senses exercised by reason of use," he may be allowed to feel at home in this subject, but what practical result he, as a Denominationalist, can propose to his mind in all this, especially what result that can even pretend to benefit the interests of Irish Methodism, it is impossible either to say or conceive. Dr. Rigg having chosen thus to wander in this bye-path of theorising, finds himself at length confronted with a formidable barrier to success, which, when first he sketched out the path in his mind, he possibly did not anticipate, namely, "how is it that the Popish Priesthood in Ireland, hate, persecute and denounce this system, if it is so *pro-Romish* as you say?" and that while intensely hated, cursed and ceaselessly fulminated against by the Papal hierarchy on the one

hand, all Protestant Denominations, Wesleyan Methodists included, approve of, defend and love it, and wish to see it extended to the whole of Ireland? Now this, *à priori*, is simply inexplicable and unanswerable from Dr. Rigg's standpoint, and no amount of controversial sophistry, or artful dust-throwing, can make it otherwise. Had Dr. Rigg, on being brought face to face with this twofold fact of Protestant approval and Popish hatred of the "Irish System," frankly acknowledged it to be a problem which he could not solve upon any other supposition than that his own theoretic notion of that system must be essentially a false one, and as such at once discarded it, *all* must have admired his openness and candour; nor would *any* in such a case have thought him less great than at present—but this from Dr. Rigg would have been too much, seemingly, to expect. Setting out with the apparent conviction that the deductions of an original thinker *must be right*, the magnanimity of acknowledged defeat when he is beaten, is something which Dr. Rigg has yet to learn. However he may inwardly feel on being confronted with this insuperable barrier in the present instance therefore, it will never do to betray any visible sign of misgivings or of fear, and so he enters upon it like a certain modern campaigner, "with a light heart."

Who has not read of formidable foes having been overcome by even timid hearts, solely through the self-possession of "*putting a good face upon it*" in an emergency? Dr. Rigg evidently *has*, and seems impressed with the notion that what has been accomplished once, *may be* accomplished again, and hence he rushes for a few paces boldly up to the difficulty. "I am asked,"

says Dr. Rigg, "how it is that the Roman Catholic Priests are so much opposed to that system, and that the various Protestant Denominations have come to be altogether in favour of it?" Well, a very fair and natural question to ask, Doctor; pray how do you answer it? Now give audience, for here is the reply! "Did not Mr. McMillen hear what Mr. Arthur said?" Well, perhaps he did, and possibly he did not, but in either case what of *that*?

Did Mr. Arthur answer this question? did he pretend to answer it? pray, what is this dreadful thing which "Mr. Arthur said?" Why, in meeting the objection of some Denominationalists that, if we did give up our schools or consent to their being gradually merged, we were powerless with the Government of this country, and could get nothing in return, "Mr. Arthur said" this: "When the Government had fixed a policy for Ireland (and a noble national policy it was, worthy of the man, and worthy now of his memory—the late Lord Derby), the Irish Presbyterians, a comparatively small body, met the Government again and again, until they almost compelled it to reverse its policy. If, then, the influence of a small body on a great Government could succeed in rolling back a generous policy, what must be the influence of a *large body like our own*, moving, not for a narrower, but a larger policy!" This is "what Mr. Arthur said," and the connection in which he said it; yet if Mr. McMillen happened to be out of the Conference or the hearing of Mr. Arthur when he spoke, Mr. McMillen was free to infer, from the manner and connection of Dr. Rigg's interrogative, that Mr. Arthur had distinctly and deliberately conceded the whole point at

issue, and that it was not for anyone now to reopen a question which had been so authoritatively settled ! This is confessedly smart and ingenious ; but Dr. Rigg ought to have remembered that Mr. McMillen, being an Irishman, would be accustomed to this Hibernian method of answering a given question by asking another ! and thus not so likely to be bewildered by it as from the Doctor's standpoint might be desirable. But let us "hear what Mr. Arthur said," according to Dr. Rigg's rendering of it.

"In 1840 the Presbyterians fought a great fight with the Board, and succeeded in gaining from the Board, that all Denominational schools, as such, should be adopted by the Board, on the very slight and easy conditions to which I have referred." "No wonder, then," exclaims Dr. Rigg, "that the Denominations became friendly." We reply, *it is a wonder of wonders*, provided there is any truth in Dr. Rigg's assumption, that the Irish System is "*pro-Romish*" in its character or bearings. On the assumption of Dr. Rigg's being in error on this point,—then, indeed, it is "no wonder that the Denominations have become friendly ;" but upon any other assumption the wonder, even on the Protestant and friendly side of the question, remains unexplained and untouched by anything which Dr. Rigg has either said or insinuated. This, however, is incomparably the smaller part of Dr. Rigg's difficulty, and yet he fails to grapple with it. As though he had satisfactorily disposed of the Protestant side of the question, however, he passes on to the Romish side, and inquires : "But why have the Roman Catholics become unfavourable?" Here we notice how ingeniously the Doctor's *minifying*

power is brought to bear in his form of stating the difficulty. We have to remind him, however, that it is not "*the Roman Catholics*," which expression naturally directs our minds to the *Romish laity*, most of whom are incapable of taking an intelligent, comprehensive, and accurate view of any subject, and might, therefore, easily be deceived as to the nature and bearing of "the Irish System"—it is not these who, except in a *secondary sense*, are opposed to it; but the *quick-discerning, far-seeing, astute, and eagle-eyed, Romish hierarchy*, known the world over for the accuracy with which they weigh, and decide the bearings, whether adverse or favourable of any great public question which may come before them, and whose attitude of friendliness or hostility towards all public questions is at once decided according to whether the given question tends to further or frustrate their designs. This is the class of men, we would remind Dr. Rigg, who stand foremost in opposing "the Irish System" which, in the face of such facts, he so preposterously characterises as "pro-Romish!"

We have, further, to remind Dr. Rigg that his euphemism, "*unfavourable*," for *the most inveterate hatred*, while peculiarly convenient for his purpose, cannot be allowed to pass as descriptive of the views and feelings of the Popish priests in relation to the system which he so feebly declares to be "pro-Romish." It is, as Dr. Rigg well knows, a hatred of the system extending to the most constant and violent opposition which the Romish priesthood can offer, together with the regular denunciation and execration "from the altar" of those "*Catholics*" who dare to encourage it!

Really, Dr. Rigg's notions of his own authority as an oracle, and of his fellow-countrymen's credulity, must be very extravagant, when, in the teeth of *such facts*, he puts forth his *ipse dixit*, that the system thus cursed and resisted by Popish priests, is pro-Romish in its action, and lays down this dictum with the sanguine hope of securing the credence of thoughtful men!

The manner in which Dr. Rigg disposes of the difficulty in this controversy, is, in the highest degree, amusing. "But I am asked," says the Doctor, "Why have the Roman Catholics become unfavourable?" "Does Mr. McMillen think before he asks that question?" (!) Put this down to rhetorical flourish and pass on. "Have we never heard of the name of Archbishop Murray?" Ditto! "Are we unaware that Archbishop Murray once lived, but is now dead?" How boundless the Doctor's knowledge! "Are we aware that Archbishop McHale succeeded to Archbishop Murray?" Could the world have gone on in ignorance of such a stupendous fact? "and that Cardinal Cullen has out-done Archbishop McHale?" Alack, poor Archbishop! (Addressing the Irish Representatives the Doctor proceeds with his catechetical information!) "Are you aware that you are under a different bench of Archbishops, and that it is (observe it) the *Ultramontane dispensation*, under which you now are, that has made the difference?" (!) Here we may be content to let Dr. Rigg bear witness against himself, since he has chosen to do so, and have only to endorse his last sentence now quoted, and to understand its real significance in order to leave him without a vestige of ground to stand upon. If his somewhat pompous interrogatives,

in relation to "Archbishop Murray," "Archbishop McHale," &c., are not to be reduced to mere sound and rhetorical dash, they mean this, that under the rule of those *less extreme* and arrogant men, the *Irish System* was not resisted by the priesthood as it is at present. And that the reason why it is now hated, denounced, and persecuted, is, that under the rule of the Ultramontane Cardinal Cullen, who can brook nothing that is liberal, or generous, except in a Popish direction, it is clearly seen to have *no favourable* bearing upon the aggressive designs and action of Popery, *but the reverse*, as far as Ireland is concerned. Could Dr. Rigg, had he tried it, have brought forward more convincing and conclusive proof of the baselessness of his theory, that this system is "pro-Romish" in its tendency and bearing, than is thus afforded by the statement of these facts, which he has unaccountably brought forward under the notion of being thereby sustained? We think it impossible. It is precisely the class of facts which would most naturally be suggested to *Mr. McMillen's mind* by way of rebutting Dr. Rigg's unwarrantable assertions.

Dr. Rigg, however unconscious of the full and real import of these facts up to the moment in which he stated them, yet manifestly has no sooner uttered them than he wakes up to the reality that they are admissions altogether fatal to his conclusions; hence, he at this point betrays an anxious haste to change the ground which is shaking under him, and get to a more tenable position. In reaching this he adroitly covers his retreat by "asking another question;" "How has this come about?" And answering that question by a *reiteration of that which*

he had undertaken to prove!!! “By the pro-Romish Administration of the National Board,” says Dr. Rigg, “during the past five-and-twenty years!” This is one of the most brilliant examples of effete reasoning and self-stultification we have ever met with! Let us look at it for a moment longer; it may prove a warning to the Doctor, and lead him to look before he leaps, in future. Dr. Rigg sets out with the proposition that the Irish System is more Denominational, and pro-Romish than anything we have yet got in England. On being asked to explain upon his assumption how it is, that the Popish Priesthood of Ireland to a man, hate, oppose, and seek its overthrow, he replies that it is because of the extreme Popish arrogance of that priesthood which has been intensified by the Ultramontane rule of Cardinal Cullen. The inevitable conclusion from this is, that this Irish System is felt to be so unfavourable to Papal ascendancy in Ireland: that the more resolutely bent upon this ascendancy the priesthood becomes, the more inveterately are they led to hate, and violently to oppose it. But “how has this been brought about?” asks the worthy Doctor, and the reply is magnificent—“By the pro-Romish Administration of the National Board for the last five-and-twenty years!” That is, the Popish Priesthood have been brought to hate this system increasingly *because it has so thoroughly subverted their ends* “for the last five-and-twenty-years!!!” We suggest, that our paradoxical Doctor give Pius IX. timely warning that there is a deeply laid conspiracy against him amongst the Irish Priesthood, as manifested in their systematic resistance of the Irish Education System, which, “for the past five-and-twenty years” has served his interests so well!

But, lest Dr. Rigg should be pressed any farther on this point, he threatens us mysteriously with "the history of Father O'Keeffe!" and his own general enlightenment in relation to "the things which are going on in Ireland!" As we know not yet therefore, in what position that notorious "Father" may come out of Court, or what new use Dr. Rigg may make of his "history," when to it is added the episode of his present litigant action against Cardinal Cullen, we must be content to "wait and see." Dr. Rigg, we observe, both at the beginning and conclusion of his speech, has expressed his special thankfulness that he was permitted and enabled to speak. We admire the Doctor's grateful spirit, but, if we except the *extreme length of his oration*, we are constrained to acknowledge, that he is thankful for small mercies!

CHAPTER IX.

THE REV. ALEXANDER MCAULAY AND THE REV. BENJAMIN GREGORY.

THE Rev. Alexander McAulay, realising that the great body of Wesleyan ministers would no longer consent to the Connexion being *misrepresented* as in favour of Denominationalism, expressed his conviction that the loss of our nine hundred schools would be but a small loss compared with the loss of unity in our ministerial brotherhood—(a calamity imminent and inevitable should the Denominational principle be longer pressed or insisted upon).

Meeting the stereotyped and hackneyed objection that the adoption of Mr. Arthur's Resolution "would be in opposition to the principles they had maintained from the beginning," as though they professed to be infallible, and could not change their policy in relation to a question of this nature without destroying themselves. Mr. McAulay thought they need not be so excessively careful in referring to what they had done in the past, as in view of the entirely new state of things now ushered in, on the Education question, they were not bound *even* in *consistency* to pursue the same course. "The great question," said Mr. McAulay, "ought to be, how this new state of things is to be best met and most effectually dealt with. As to their dread of Secularism. "To me it appears," said Mr. McAulay, "first of all, that what may be called Secularism is much more likely to be the

fruit of the Denominational System, than of the National System, as advocated in Mr. Arthur's Resolution. Look for example at the working of this Conscience Clause. If a poor man withdraw his child from the Denominational school during the hour appointed for religious instruction (and my conviction is that faithfulness to what we call godliness and Scriptural truth will compel us, in numerous instances, to do this), then it follows that that child will get nothing but a Secular Education, while the number of Romish and Romanising schools from which our children should thus have to be withdrawn would be so great that, in point of fact, that course would thoroughly secularise the teaching of our own children, whose religious instruction we are bound to guard as Ministers of Jesus Christ."

As Mr. Arthur, and those who supported his Resolution, had been twitted with their inability to carry any such Resolution in the "Mixed Committees"—"I think," said Mr. McAulay, "the arguments drawn from those mixed Committees are altogether fallacious." What are the facts of the case? "Had any of us who sat in those mixed Committees attempted to bring forward a Resolution such as Mr. Arthur has proposed, we should have been told at once that that Resolution *could not be put by the chair*—that it was contrary to our authoritative documents, declared principles, and so forth." "What," continues Mr. McAulay, "has been the consequence of all this? I and others have felt ourselves compelled, by previous decisions of the Conference, to accept the nearest compromise we could get. It is now high time, however, that we should make such a declaration of our policy and principles as that we shall feel no longer

bound by our action in the past. I wish to say another thing: every man must take his own view of Mr. Arthur's Resolution, for myself I regard it as declaring the minimum of religious instruction which should be taught in the schools of this country.

"The simple reading of the Bible would satisfy me. Whenever the Bible is read, God's truth is read—the thoughts that came out of the mind of God go into the mind of the child; but if you set an unconverted teacher to begin to meddle with that truth, the probability is that he will destroy the effect of what is there entirely."

Are we prepared to ask the State to make unconverted men by thousands the teachers of religion to our children? Will anyone say that *that* is religious teaching? "But that is part, only part of what your Denominationalism secures." "Christ, I maintain," said Mr. McAulay, "never founded a Church to teach geography and history, but religion, pure and simple, that Church, therefore, has it laid upon its conscience to see to it as far as possible, that every child is taught true and saving knowledge, and I am bound to protect every such child as far as I can from the teaching of heresy under the name of religion. I am, therefore, bound to oppose the Denominational System with soul and might." . . . "We were well instructed last night by Mr. Simpson," continued Mr. McAulay, "when in relation to India he told us that rather than that the Bible should be taught in the schools by men with the mark of Vishnu and Shiva on their foreheads, they would have the Bible out of the schools altogether. What is religious teaching? Is that religious teaching?"

It is because Denominationalism means *irreligious* teaching in the majority of cases that I am opposed to it. That word religion is in this connection made to cover Unitarianism, Popery, High Churchism, and Infidelity. I dare not be a party to the teaching of these." . . . "We owe a duty to the whole nation, and I believe that the National Education of this country can only be safely promoted if in the day schools, neither Church of England, Clergymen, nor Nonconformist ministers are allowed to meddle or to muddle." Mr. McAulay further expresses his persuasion, that "instead of getting less religious instruction under a National System, the children of this country brought up to the simple reading of the Bible in the schools would thereby get a good deal of the Sectarian spirit out of them; be relieved of a large amount of hurtful prejudice, and become more inclined to attach importance to the Word of God, than to Sectarian differences, all of which would be a boon to the rising generation, and to the nation at large."

Objecting to the narrow-minded policy which cannot look beyond the immediate circle of Methodism, Mr. McAulay was satisfied that as Methodists this contracted view of things had prevented us "from taking our proper place in directing the National Education of this country." "On the one hand," said Mr. McAulay, "the Church of England has been trying to use us for their own purposes, and I will be no party to our becoming *their tool*. On the other hand, the Dissenters have been trying to get hold of us, and I am equally in love with these. I am a Methodist, and I ask, therefore, that Mr. Arthur's Resolution be adopted by this Conference, in order that we may take our proper place in

guiding and controlling the education of this nation." Some had tried to make much of the Conscience Clause found in the present Act, but Mr. McAulay believed it to be practically worthless. "I believe," says Mr. McAulay, "that clergymen of the Established Church will pay as much regard to this Conscience Clause, as they have paid to those other Conscience Clauses to which they have subscribed in the Thirty-nine Articles!"

In conclusion, Mr. McAulay urged the Conference not to separate without declaring a policy which could be respected as representing the mind of the majority. He was anxious to preserve the unity of the brotherhood in Methodism, but such unity could be no longer preserved, if they were to be governed by minorities! Mr. McAulay's speech, free alike from sophisms, and the vague or mystifying subtleties resulting from a studied euphuism, will speak for itself, while the principles he has here laid down, the facts he has stated, and the sentiments of which he has so manfully delivered himself, will find an echo and a response in the hearts of myriads in Methodism beyond those who in the Conference were favoured with his *viva voce* utterances.

Had the speeches of his Denominational brethren—most of whom we personally esteem as much as Mr. McAulay—been characterised by the same straightforwardness, unsophisticated and unwarped simplicity, we should have been spared the painful duty of exposing the fallacy and hollowness of their arguments, and the worthlessness of their conclusions, which, in the interests of truth and justice, we have felt compelled to discharge, and yet, we fear, we have not done. We have felt this, in itself unattractive duty, to be all the more incumbent

upon us, because, in the Conference itself, the devious windings of our Denominational brethren could not be entered into, nor their plausible sophistry, and manifold fallacies exposed, without being diverted from the great leading questions raised by the Resolution on the one hand, and the Amendment on the other; and without, therefore, sacrificing the main object kept in view.

For the high order of intellect, the piety, the numerous excellencies and personal qualities of the Rev. Benjamin Gregory, we have the highest regard. It has sometimes appeared to us, however, as though Mr. Gregory's intellectuality unfitted him for grasping *accurately and readily*, and for dealing practically with more commonplace things, than those which the eagle-like flight of his mind is accustomed to pursue. In short, we have often been impressed with the seeming aptitude which he has for taking hold of the wrong side of practical questions which have been brought before him *suddenly and unexpectedly*; and from wrong premises necessarily pressing on to false conclusions. On such occasions Mr. Gregory has invariably pressed into his service some argument or consideration which has been in direct opposition to the conclusions he has sought to reach; and, in order to render it as plausible as possible, has sometimes appeared to treat it with an ingenious disingenuousness, which we are persuaded is no natural characteristic of the man, and to which he would never have descended had he had due time for consideration before entering the arena of debate. We could, if it were needful, illustrate and bear out these views by referring to the infelicitous position which Mr. Gregory, at several Conferences, has been unfortunate enough to take up in relation to other matters

of a common-place nature, although we gladly acknowledge that this is not the rule.

We suppose Mr. Gregory is not entirely free from the prejudice of education and established customs, any more than most men; and do not wrong him, we trust, when we further add that he has not so entirely broken loose from these shackles as some have, who at one time were equally warped and biassed. Be this as it may, the foregoing considerations, if not the only conceivable solution, afford at least to our minds, the most ready and probable explanation of the mysterious fact, that so great a mind should play such an unenviable part in any practical question as Mr. Gregory has discovered in connection with the particular subject now under consideration.

Having already dealt with the mystery which was made to surround Mr. Arthur's refusal to answer Mr. Olver's questions, we shall not now notice Mr. Gregory's contribution towards the creation of that hobgoblin, but express the hope that Mr. Gregory's simile, when he compared Mr. Arthur to "Leviathan," was both intended and understood as harmless pleasantry. It has afforded us much gratification indeed, to find, from Mr. Arthur's reply to all who had opposed him, that he was impressed with the kindly manner and spirit in which that opposition had been expressed. We previously feared we had discovered some painful exceptions to this rule; and, on Mr. Arthur stating that it had seemed to him as though all had been afraid to wound his mind through his frail body, could hardly banish the conviction, that if his skin had not been pierced and "filled with barbed irons, nor his head with

fish spears," it was not Mr. Gregory's fault! At the same time we believe Mr. Gregory to be too good a man to wound any wilfully or wantonly. Neither this belief on the one hand, nor our profound personal respect and esteem for Mr. Gregory on the other, can alter the fact, or hinder us from stating it, however, that, from whatever cause it may be supposed to have arisen, Mr. Gregory, in connection with the Education question, has gravely imposed upon himself by the most palpable and egregious fallacies, and exhibited in his speech the most astonishing fruits of a mistified vision, a warped judgment, or a turbid mind. Having "got out of Mr. McAulay" what it would seem he had not got out of Mr. Arthur's speech—that his Resolution meant simply Bible-reading in the schools.

Mr. Gregory, following in the wake of others who think that *the Word of God is nothing without, or nothing compared with, human and erring interpretations of it*, represents Mr. Arthur and "Mr. McAulay as proposing to go to the Government of this country to ask it to forbid Scriptural instruction in the public elementary schools of the nation!" This erroneous, not to say unfair putting of the case, as exhibiting the underlying fallacy already pointed out, was, of course, responded to by bursts of "No, no," as the words fell from Mr. Gregory's lips. "Well," continues Mr. Gregory, "he proposes that the Bible should be there, and simply read." Ah! a widely different proposal in the eyes of all who are willing to view it with unbiassed minds; but what is Mr. Gregory's estimate of the matter? "What is that," he asks, "but to cover secularism under the back of the Bible!" How the *opening* and reading of

the Word of God is a covering of "secularism under the back of the Bible," or of aught else which is inconsistent with the Bible itself, we utterly fail to see, and must leave to such ingenious minds as Mr. Gregory's to make out. It is one of those equally bold and loose assertions of which there are many from the Denominational side in connection with this controversy, which conveys no definite idea to the mind, and is incapable of being sustained by any rational proof.

"You say," continues Mr. Gregory, "you would have the Bible but nothing else; the Bible alone is to be your religion." Is anything else to be Mr. Gregory's? Anything besides the Bible? that is to be put before the Bible? or on an equality with the Bible? Perhaps not; "but supposing the Bible is to be so read, there might be a Denominational Mode of reading the Bible." Well there might, and there might not; but, supposing there should, what of that? "I," says Mr. Gregory, "could give you specimens of the High Church way of reading the Bible, of the Broad Church way, the Calvinist way, and the Methodist way." Could Mr. Gregory indeed do so? Then how has he got to be so familiar with these "Denominational Modes" as to be able *even now* to imitate them? Why manifestly by their being *already in full operation under the Denominational System*; by their being a thing of the past and of the present! Why then does Mr. Gregory impose upon himself, not to say upon others, by speaking of these "Denominational Modes of reading the Bible" as though they were something which *could only come into existence in the event of Mr. Arthur's Resolution being adopted*? Referring to this "High Church, and Broad Church mode of read-

ing the Bible"—"You could not keep that out," exclaims Mr. Gregory! Be it so, could Mr. Gregory "*keep that out*" by the continuance of Denominationalism? Is Mr. Gregory able to "keep that out" at present? Has he been able to "keep that out" in the past? The underlying fallacy of this objection also is now transparent. If Mr. Gregory wishes to know what—by the carrying of Mr. Arthur's Resolution—*we could keep out* of the schools, we will tell him. Something of the utmost importance to be kept out, and what, by his Denominationalism, Mr. Gregory can neither keep out nor put out, even if he would. We should put out and keep out the express and systematic inculcation of all the Bible-perverting and soul-destroying heresies of Popery, as at present taught in the name of the Bible and of the God of the Bible, alike in Popish schools proper, and the pervert schools of the so-called Church of England! We should put out and keep out the practical infidelity of the "Broad Church," which is as broad as the "Broad way to the destruction." We should put out and keep out the heresies of Socinianism that the Son of God is a mere man, that "the atonement" is a mere figure of speech, that "total depravity" is an insult offered to the dignity of human nature, that repentance is meritorious, and that nothing more is required to fit for heaven, than to live on tolerably peaceful terms with neighbours, and keep one's self passably honest! These, with the final restoration of wicked men and devils, as taught by the Universalists, on the one hand, and the unconditional predestination of great masses of men to eternal woe, as taught by ultra-Calvinists on the other, would be put out, and kept out, but all of which are

being taught, and must inevitably be taught upon a scale still more extensively ruinous to truth, to morality, and the souls of men under the Denominational System.

Mr. Gregory, it would seem, knows of a "Methodist way of reading the Bible" in the school. We must say, as distinct from the *proper English way* of reading the Scriptures, *we do not*; and could have wished that the Conference had requested Mr. Gregory to favour it with a few specimens. All the more so as this "Methodist way" has something so peculiar about it, that wherever it is resorted to, it leads to all sorts of interruptions, in the form of questions being put to the teacher by the scholar! "If you read the Bible in the Methodist way," says Mr. Gregory, "you will have your children asking you questions; they will ask what it means," &c. How astonishing that *this "Methodist way" has never yet been tried!* We know of no Methodist day school, and we more than doubt if Mr. Gregory knows of one, where the children, unless *by the express arrangement of the teacher*, are in the habit of asking questions on the Bible lesson *even now*; and how very mischievous of those little Methodist urchins, if they should just set themselves for asking their teachers all sorts of questions on the Bible, *because they* knew his lips were *sealed*, although failing to do so, when the teacher had full scope!!!

How very badly off for objections the man must be, who draws upon his imagination thus! But in these schools, with the Bible, Mr. Gregory all at once finds out marvellous *teachers* as well as scholars. "If the teacher has got a tongue of fire, must we tell him to

keep that tongue within his teeth?" asks Mr. Gregory. We suppose Mr. Gregory does not mean us to understand by this expression, a copy of Mr. Arthur's book, but that kind of tongue which Mr. Arthur in his book represents the one hundred and twenty as having been endowed with on the Day of Pentecost. In short, a special talent for preaching the Gospel! Then get him into a Methodist Sunday school, or on the Local Preacher's Plan, or both, and if his "tongue of fire" cannot find sufficient employment in these spheres, it would be worth the superintendent's while in whose circuit that extraordinary teacher is found, to ask him what he thought of offering himself as a candidate for the Wesleyan ministry! Mr. Gregory's assumption of course is, that this extraordinary teacher with his "tongue of fire," and (as a matter of course) *no sphere of usefulness* in the world or in the Church in which he can exercise his gifts, is being consumed with a daily burning desire to hold forth in preaching the Gospel to the children in the day school! The entire picture, however, is so far-fetched and romantic, as to be altogether unworthy of serious attention, were it not for the sacred and solemn connection in which his very simile has placed it. We are equally surprised and sorry to find that Mr. Gregory is even more infelicitous and fallacious when he comes to quote Scripture here. He is opposing the mere reading of the Bible in the schools, and like the most of his Denominational brethren, almost all his objections to this are based upon the assumption, that from a religious point of view, the mere reading of the Bible, and therefore the mere text of God's Word, is nothing or next to nothing, but that the teacher's interpretation

of it from the same standpoint, is true spiritual instruction, effectual religious teaching, and of course immeasurably better than the mere Word of God, speaking for itself! And lo! he would fain press the Word of God into his service in support of these notions; hence he quotes the following:—"From a child (said the Apostle) thou hast known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation!" But did it not occur to our dear friend that this is St. Paul *versus* Gregory? that this sword of the Spirit is wielded against the entire assumptions upon which he and his co-Denominationalists have been proceeding? that a more suitable and conclusive portion of Scripture could hardly have been put into Mr. Arthur or Mr. McAulay's lips, with which to overturn the false and dangerous principle upon which all this opposition to the mere reading of the Bible is grounded? In short, that an argument more conspicuously damaging and suicidal as far as Mr. Gregory's object was concerned could not possibly have been presented.

It is, we hold, a reflection upon the wisdom and goodness of God to say or insinuate, that His will, as revealed in His Word, is beyond the grasp of the most ordinary capacity, so that the mere reading of that Book cannot, to such minds, make God's will and law intelligible. In truth, until this Education controversy came forward, Wesleyan pulpits at least have been always accustomed to proclaim the contrary doctrine: that all that is practical and essential to man in God's Book is so plain and simple that he may run that readeth it. If Mr. Gregory should reply—that while this may be true as far as men and women are con-

cerned, yet it cannot be supposed to apply to children. We answer it does ; and upon his own showing, in the passage of Scripture which he has already quoted. The simplicity of the Scriptures, coming down even to the capacity of a child, and the ability of the Scriptures to instruct even such an one savingly, are the two, and the only two great ideas which the passage contains ; but both are fatal to Mr. Gregory's notions in relation to Bible reading in the day school. But let Mr. Gregory proceed. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness." "Would you refuse that ? Would you take that out of the teachers power ?" asks Mr. Gregory ! Refuse what ? take what out of the teacher's power ? "All Scripture as given by the inspiration of God ?" Certainly not. Mr. Arthur's Resolution would give it all to both scholars and teachers, by the reading of the Bible daily. But perhaps Mr. Gregory's question alludes to the "doctrine," "reproof," "correction," and "instruction in righteousness," for which "*all Scripture*" is here declared to be "profitable." If so, then there is here the same clinging to the manifest fallacy, the grave error that while the teacher's comments are profitable for all these, the Scriptures themselves, although given by God's inspiration are not ! Nay, let God be true, though every man a liar, it is "*all Scripture*" which is here declared to be profitable "for doctrine, for conviction, for amendment, and for instruction in righteousness," not the comments of any day school teacher, nor the interpretation of any Church or human authority under heaven. Mr. Gregory needs no one to refute him here, he has abundantly refuted him-

self. While the fact of so able a man and theologian having done so, so signally; presents a problem which we think admits of no other solution than that, neither reason, nor truth, nor Scripture will join the man, in his opposition to the simple reading of the Bible in the day school.

Mr. Gregory's quotation from "the principle of King's College," like his citations from Scripture here, has got absolutely nothing in his favour, but everything against his opposition to the reading of the Bible in the school. Had the "principal" been testifying to the importance of specific doctrines deduced from the Bible during school or college hours, then indeed it would have suited Mr. Gregory's purpose. Although, as the mere opinion of *one man*, it could not have gone a great way in his favour. But nothing of the kind. "The principal" is simply bearing testimony to his estimate of the importance of "the Bible lesson *as a mere educational appliance*."

Mr. Gregory, indeed, is not likely to shrink from saying that there can be no Bible lesson unless the teacher is allowed to teach Sectarian doctrines—just as he has already practically asserted that no religious instruction can be obtained by the mere reading of the Bible; but the Word of God itself as plainly declares the contrary, and we do not hesitate as to which of the twain we are to believe and accept.

Mr. Gregory's reference to Martin Luther has been sufficiently answered by Mr. Holland, so that it need not detain us here beyond the passing observation that when he represents the reading of the Bible in the day school as one, and the same with saying to the teacher,

“you are not to say a word about religion ;” it is another illustration of his misconception and grievous misrepresentation of the power of God’s Word to speak for itself.

Mr. Gregory’s views, in relation to the State Church’s lease of existence in this country are peculiarly worthy of notice, being the views of a man who has always been known to be the attached friend of the Establishment. “ Unless one of two things happens in the Church of England,” said Mr. Gregory, “ it cannot survive the present century.” Either God must pour out His Spirit upon that Church or the Nonconformists must pursue what Mr. Gregory has been pleased to designate “ a foolish, fanatical, and unscriptural policy.” This is an expression of opinion so manifestly biassed and one-sided as to demand as strong an expression on the opposite side. We trust, then, that the Nonconformists will continue to pursue the same wise, sound, and Scriptural policy towards the so-called State Church which has hitherto distinguished them ; but that they may pursue it with tenfold more energy, determination, and success, until, in the interests of truth, righteousness, and the nation, that unscriptural, corrupt, and almost entirely rotten system totters to its fall.

Vile indeed must be the system when one of its hitherto ardent admirers, as the mists of prejudice begin to be dissipated from his vision by the power of truth, or, what is practically the same, as the dense blackness of that system discloses itself through the mists which hitherto concealed its moral deformity—is forced to acknowledge that unless Almighty God pours out His Spirit to its renovation, neither its prestige nor the tena-

scious clinging to it of the upper ten thousand shall be able for a quarter of a century longer to hold back or divert the course of that avalanche of a nation's loathing and indignation which even now moves to its destruction! "You may protest," says Mr. Gregory, "that you love the Bible and religious instruction all the more because you resolve to take *it*" (?) (which? the former or the latter) "out of the Elementary Schools, but the more vehemently you protest the more will you be disbelieved!" This is plain, but for whom besides himself does Mr. Gregory thus speak? and, putting it in plain English, (for, by the way, it is a little obscure) what is it that Mr. Gregory must be here understood as saying? Addressing brethren who, for conscientiousness, ardent love of God's Word, and *strict probity* are not a whit behind Mr. Gregory himself, he, in the spirit of modest charity, informs them: "You may protest that you love the Bible all the more because you seek to exclude *Sectarian, corrupt, pernicious* and anti-Scriptural teaching from the Elementary Schools; but the more vehemently you protest, the more will you be branded as hypocrites and liars." Then, pray, by whom?

Putting the matter thus in its true light, we really neither can nor will do Mr. Gregory the gross injustice of supposing that he included *himself* in this assertion, as little can we imagine that he would bring such a charge against any of his Denominational brethren in the same Ministry or Connexion. In whose behalf, then, must he be here understood as making such an outrageous assertion? Why a mighty host of human beings, whose number, and the worth of whose opinions, we will now try to estimate.

Mr. Gregory is here declaring a fact in relation to the tens of thousands of Jesuits and Romanizers, both lay and clerical, found within the pale of the so-called Church of England: in relation to Cardinal Cullen, the Popish Priesthood, the professors and students of Maynooth College, and the Irish rabble who are tied down neck and heel, soul and body, to believe, and think, and say, and act, only as their masters bid them: in relation to Archbishop Manning, and his motley crew of various orders in England. In short, he is declaring a stern fact, in relation to upwards of one hundred and seventy millions of Papists who, from the Pope downwards, are spread like a pestilence over the face of the earth! These, almost to a man, would stand ready to brand Mr. Arthur, and those who would carry his Resolution, as hypocrites and liars, in the face of their vehement declarations of love for the Bible. But let Mr. Gregory clearly understand it: "Them and their god alike we dare!"

It is somewhat instructive in its way, to find with what facility Mr. Gregory can alternately ignore the power of the Bible to impart religious instruction, and represent the Bible and religious instruction as identical, according to the purpose he desires to serve. Examples of the former have already been pointed out in abundance; here is a specimen of the latter:—

"You may try as you please to get the people of this country to prohibit religious instruction in the schools, but you will try in vain; the people have been taught better. Who, moreover, is to be blamed for it, that the British public *will* have Scriptural instruction? We have our fathers to blame for this—they have taught us *to love the Scriptures*"!!!

Such specious sophistry may, in the heat of controversy, pass with some for sound argument, honest and able opposition; but only requires to be calmly and impartially examined, by the aid of sound reason, in order to the discovery of its spurious character, and the consequent failure and defeat of the objects it was designed to serve.

When small men fail, in consequence of the unsoundness of their arguments, we are still left at liberty to believe that the cause they represent may be good and strong notwithstanding, although there has been failure and worthlessness about the advocacy. But when *great men* such as Mr. Gregory, betray such unwonted weakness, notwithstanding that they have every motive for putting forth their best efforts, there is but one conclusion to which shrewd and intelligent minds can come,—the cause or question, or side of the question, which they unfortunately represent is so essentially bad and indefensible, that no amount of talent in its advocates could commend it to the love, admiration, or acceptance of intelligent and independent minds. To reverse the order of our argument. When the opposite side of the question is so underlaid and fortified on every side by truth, reason, and equity, that such great men as the class to which Mr. Gregory unquestionably belongs—cannot even hope to damage it, without having recourse to fallacy for logic, sophism for argument, and logical misrepresentation for statements of fact; it may be accepted as conclusive and satisfactory proof that that which is so impregnable shall at no great distance commend itself, not to Methodism merely, but to the overwhelming majority of the nation at large, as its covert and hiding-place from the

bold menaces of an anti-Christian and aggressive Papacy on the one hand, and a godless Broad Churchism on the other.

On the whole, from the standpoint of an ardent wish to see the downfall of a noxious Denominationalism, we have every reason to feel grateful to Mr. Gregory for the speech of which, as the opponent of Mr. Arthur's Resolution, he has delivered himself. We trust the next time Mr. Gregory stands prominently forward as a debater in connection with any great public question, it may be his good fortune to take a side more worthy of his great powers and shining talents, so as to be able to sustain his position better, and more in keeping with the dignity of his merited reputation as a theologian, a public benefactor, a scholar, and logician.

CHAPTER X.

*THE REVS. SAMUEL COLEY, JOHN BOND, W.
McMULLEN, AND E. E. JENKINS, M.A.*

THE Rev. Samuel Coley, after attempting to give a summary representation of the state of affairs in relation to the Education question in this country, finds a "people outside"—who, or what they are he does not pretend to indicate—"who say, statesmen and politicians have done their best to meet you, and now you are a jangling set of churches who have set yourselves to hinder this work." If these "people" are indeed "outside" all the churches, they must be the few thousand avowed Atheists and Deists whom the nation unfortunately contains, and if so, we do not see why either Denominationalists or Unsectarians in this question should be much influenced by what such "people outside" may "say." Less still do we see how Mr. Coley's conclusion should follow, that, in view of what these "people outside say," if Mr. Arthur's Resolution should be passed, it would be doing harm to the cause of religion in this land." We confess this unusual vagueness of style in Mr. Coley, impresses us that while he may be feeling his way, he does not as yet feel at home in his subject. Mr. Coley did "not think that any System could be called National which did not involve in it some recognition of the Denominations of this country." Let Mr. Coley for a moment be supposed to be uttering this sentiment in relation to a National Church, and we

have got the "*Levelling up system*" to our heart's content. Applying it to the Education question, however, as Mr. Coley intended, what does it prove? It proves Mr. Coley to be proceeding upon the false assumption, that it is an essential part of the Christian Church's work and duty to teach reading, writing, grammar, geography, and arithmetic. Hence, no System which teaches these can, in Mr. Coley's view, be National, which does not recognise the Church's right and bounden duty to teach these. We deny both premises and conclusion, and apprehend Mr. Coley himself is not prepared, on a calm review of his position, to sustain it by any kind of proof. Admitting, however, for the sake of argument, what is manifestly Mr. Coley's assumption, namely, that it is part of the Christian Church's true and proper work to be a Secular Educator, is he prepared to deny that the reading of the *Bible in the School*—the Book which is the very foundation of all Churches which are worthy of the name—is or would be a substantial recognition of all such Denominations in a National System? We think the denial of this would give evidence of such a low and mean estimate of the importance and worth of the Scriptures as Mr. Coley is not prepared for.

With regard to the passing of Mr. Arthur's Resolution, Mr. Coley has another powerful objection!—"I am very much afraid, says Mr. Coley, that our laity would have just cause of complaint against us." And on what ground does Mr. Coley rest this opinion? Why this: "It seems to me a strange thing that, in the year in which we have dedicated the 'Scott Memorial Chapel,' we should think of undoing the great life work

of John Scott." It may, indeed, to Mr. Coley seem strange, but will he answer one question on this point? Was this "Scott Memorial Chapel" ever a popular movement with the Wesleyan Connexion? If it had been, would the dedication of it have been delayed until 1872? "This is a question in which the laity of Methodism has a very large stake," Mr. Coley reminds us; but does he either say or insinuate that the scheme, either by Wesleyan ministers or laymen, was ever taken up with anything like heart, unless in a comparatively few individual cases? A Connexion which can virtually raise as a special fund, in one year, upwards of one quarter of a million pounds sterling, when the object is connexionally popular, takes four or five years of *special and repeated pressing* and pressure, before it raises £14,000 or £16,000, in the instance of the "Scott Memorial Chapel." The striking non-popularity of the object was no proof of want of respect for the personal worth of the excellent John Scott; but we would quietly whisper into Mr. Coley's ear that the *denominational element* with which the "Memorial Chapel" scheme was so largely impregnated will solve the problem of connexional tardiness in subscribing to the object. The destruction of "the life-work of the Rev. John Scott" then, although a much too strong way of putting the matter, Mr. Coley may rest assured would not be felt to be such a Connexional grievance as Mr. Coley and some of his Denominational brethren seem anxious to make out. As to Mr. Coley's expression of opinion that our great danger in this land and age is not from Popery, but from Infidelity, we think it displays an exceedingly superficial acquaintance alike with the nature of the Popish

System and its present position in this nation, as compared with what it was a quarter of a century ago. As Mr. Coley has thus brought Infidelity and Popery into comparison, and of the two inveterate evils seems most inclined to disregard the aggressions and ascendancy of the latter, we would remind him that Popery, wherever it has become dominant, in addition to its own inherent vileness and villainy, has, to a larger extent than any other system under heaven—not excepting avowedly infidel clubs and associations themselves—been the great infidel producer of that country or nation; and, by practising its thousand abominations in the name of a Holy God and religion, has made the very name of Christianity to stink in the nostrils of tens of thousands of human beings for generations after its supremacy has been destroyed.

In conclusion, we would recommend Mr. Coley to refresh his memory with a few passages from one of his own Lectures, delivered a few years ago before the Young Men's Christian Association, bearing upon Popery, and which he seems practically to have forgotten here.

The Rev. John Bond regarded Mr. Shaw's Amendment as recommending to the Conference and Methodism the inauguration of a do-nothing policy. According to that Amendment, the Elementary Education Act was upon its trial, and, therefore, we should wait and see the result! He would like to know what would be thought of the captain who would recommend a ship's crew to wait until the ship was fast upon the rocks before giving way to fear of being in danger? According to Mr. Shaw, another reason for inactivity was, that certain alterations in the "Act" were proposed to be made by

the Government, a strong reason in Mr. Bond's judgment for an opposite course from that recommended. Their wisdom was, to take their proper stand and their full share in directing the Government in the making of those contemplated alterations. Another assigned reason for delay was, that "the laity" ought to be consulted. Mr. Bond would be among the last to deprive the laity of any of their rights or privileges, but he could not refrain from animadverting upon "the shuttle-cock kind of policy which had been pursued." "When we have been meeting the Committees of the laity, all attempts at action have been resisted by our being referred to the *Conference*, and now the same attempt is made at the Conference, by referring us to the laity!" This Mr. Bond justly described as a policy of "masterly inactivity," which, for the sake of their own dignity, it behoved them at once to abandon. The Denominational System must be rooted out, and the longer it was allowed to live it would strike its roots the more deeply into the soil, and be the more difficult to extirpate. "As to Mr. Arthur's Resolution, if it was not all that could be desired, it contained much that was most desirable."

The question in relation to Ireland was not what system of Education *had been there* in the past, but what *was it to be in the future?* He wished to see the iron grasp of Popery taken from the neck of Ireland, that she might breathe freely and stand in point of dignity, contentment, good Government, and general enlightenment side by side with England. As to the noxious character of the Church of England, even in large towns where its arrogance was held in check by the multitude of Nonconformists, it was in the habit of perpretrating

dirty tricks, of which he was prepared to give illustrations; but he wished them to look at its inherent corruption, and to bear in mind that what *it is* its schools must also *be*." "What, then," said Mr. Bond, "is the Church of England? I hold now in my hand a printed paper written by a clergyman, in which it is stated that there are at the present day found in his Church, 15,000 Sacramentarian or Nothingarian clergymen;" in other words, practical Papists and Infidels! What a charming prospect for those who by their Denominationalism are practically playing into the hands of such a corrupt confederation!

Mr. Bond considered the Conscience Clause in the present Act as practically useless. While the proposed Compulsory Clause, if introduced, would prove simply ruinous, not only to the interests of Methodism, but to other people who, as well as Methodists, had a conscience and wished to guard and keep it; yet their children would be perforce swept by thousands into the ritualistic schools of the so-called Church of England. It had been repeatedly asked in the course of this discussion what we, as a Church, would gain by the adoption of Mr. Arthur's Resolution? He ventured to remind the Conference, that there was the previous question of *what is right*. Yet he would answer this oft repeated question of gain and loss. By converting the Denominational schools into School Board schools they would be relieved of a vast pecuniary burden; the money thus spent could go towards more direct spiritual work, while the divided and enfeebled working power of their Church could be turned with undivided energy and commensurate success to the pursuit of its proper business and calling.

They would further by this course get rid of a vast amount of Sectarianism, and so be able to lift their hands and fight the battle for Ireland ; which, at present, they could not do with effect or consistency, having one hand fast bound by their side. Their wisdom for their own well being, and that of the country at large, was to go in for schools in which the religious element should be simply the reading of the Bible.

The Rev. W. McMullen, Irish representative, now stood forward to say that it was with painful surprise he had listened to the character of the observations made in the course of this discussion upon the simple reading of the Bible in their schools. "Why should *you* be afraid of having the Bible read without note or comment?" asks Mr. McMullen, "Irish Methodists are not afraid of this, but Roman Catholics are, and so are Ritualistic Churchmen ; but why should Methodists be?" Much has been said about the Irish System—Dr. Rigg has maintained that it is more Denominational than the English System, and Mr. Bedford has said "there is not a doubt of it." Nay ; but stay ! "Irish Methodists '*doubt*' it, and Cardinal Cullen and his adherents '*doubt*' it. How comes it," continued Mr. McMullen, "that if the Irish System is more Denominational than the English, Cardinal Cullen, the *Freeman's Journal*, and others like-minded are so ready to applaud those who introduced the English Education Act," while they are so opposed to the Irish System? This system certainly is not more Denominational than the English, in the eyes of such men as these.

Dr. Rigg has said that the Irish model schools embody the principle of Concurrent Endowment. Cardinal Cul-

len does not think so; he hates those schools most intensely, and denounces them most vigorously." Mr. McMullen thus taking up one point after another connected with the Irish System, proceeded to show the utter inaccuracy of Dr. Rigg's assertions and conclusions, in relation to this question; while not recognising it as any part of his duty to defend the Irish System in its entirety, he was disposed to be watchful and suspicious of any system which he found Popish priests approving of; and if the English "Education Act" would suit Cardinal Cullen, Irish Methodists had not long to consider before deciding that it would not suit them—as little would it suit the best interests of either England or Ireland.

These are principles which the Denominational part of the Wesleyan Conference did not attempt to deal with, with one exception; and, as to the manner in which this was done, in this exceptional instance, we shall have something to say upon it when we come to the speech of Mr. Bedford.

Meanwhile we have to glance at the speech of the Rev. E. E. Jenkins, M.A. Having eulogised the President, and asserted his own independence in relation to the question now agitated, Mr. Jenkins, professing to be puzzled by Mr. Arthur's statement that we are, at the present time, and for some years past have been, without a policy—proceeds to prove from the minutes of Conference for the year 1841, that the Conference then "laid down a distinct policy as to their "Educational principles!" Mr. Jenkins here forgets the difference between the past and present tense—that in 1841 he, Mr. Jenkins, was rather juvenile; that when that policy was then laid down it was not to be as the law of the Medes and Per-

sians, which altereth not; that a mighty change has passed over the face of society since then; that we live in entirely different times; that supposing the policy then declared to have been the right one, which is a disputed question, it does not follow that that policy will do for the present day; and, finally, Mr. Arthur's assertion referring to the *divided state of opinion in Wesleyanism at the present time*, was perfectly correct, while Mr. Jenkins, in supposing that the minds of Wesleyan ministers and laymen since 1841, have continued unchanged, has altogether miscalculated in his reckoning, and failed to understand the facts of the case.

Mr. Jenkins soon after indeed betrays the misgivings which he has in relation to the attachment of the Wesleyan Connexion to the Denominational System, when he asserts that "as soon as the Conference should pronounce its opinion on the desirability of merging our schools into the School Boards, we should lose the support of our people!" Why then, the Denominationalists in Methodism must be very inconsiderable in number, and slender in their attachment to the present system, if they would thus so promptly take refuge under the first shadow of an excuse for ceasing to support it! *Such a sudden merging in practice*, notwithstanding that the Conference had decided upon a *gradual merging* of our schools, would simply go to prove how ripe the Connexion had become for the passing of Mr. Arthur's Resolution, and if Mr. Jenkins' prognostications here are supposed to be well grounded, they seem to say that what is thus the mind of Methodism ought to be at once complied with, and carried into effect.

Were it not that we have already had in this discus-

sion so much of the same kind of thing, we should feel disposed to call the attention of a wondering Christendom to the following sentiments of Mr. Jenkins, with a *nota bene*: "If our schools are to be merged into schools where the Bible is simply to be read, the religious instruction and salvation of the children will not be effected by them!" Does Mr. Jenkins here wish to produce the impression that the religious instruction unto the salvation of the children is effected by *the Denominational schools* of either our own or any other Church? He cannot himself possibly believe anything so preposterously wild and notoriously untrue in point of fact; yet, if to convey such an idea was not his intention, then the sentence is one of inflated wind and of solemn trifling. It contains nothing which may not in as absolute a sense be declared in relation both to Denominational schools, and the children who attend them.

We candidly tell Mr. Jenkins that, apart from the religious instruction conveyed to the children's minds in connection with the simple reading of the Bible in day schools at present, we consider all other religious instruction, such as that conveyed by catechisms, &c., to be, *even in our own schools, a name without a reality*. While in other schools, numbering eight or ten to one of our own, that "religious instruction," falsely so called, is pernicious in its action upon the children's minds and lives in the highest degree.

When Mr. Jenkins, therefore, in relation to Bible reading in schools further affirms that it "would simply be the avowal of a principle, and nothing more," our reply is that, when the principle is a right one, the practical avowal of it is a most im-

portant point, and has led to more blessed results in the Church and in the world before now than Mr. Jenkins seems to be aware of. When Mr. Jenkins avers that he "would rather have the poor children taught in Ritualistic schools than have them taught in schools where the Bible is simply read," we begin to think what an unspeakable mercy for the world it is that some people have no poor children at their disposal to corrupt and ruin!

The sentiment is so bold for a Methodist preacher to utter, however, that Mr. Jenkins himself, apparently shrinking from it, as he contemplates it in its naked distortion and vitiated deformity, endeavours to clothe and cover its repulsive features with the embellishments of fiction and fantasy. Hence he speaks of the poor children in these Ritualistic schools as "hearing the Word of God read, and as having the attractive parables of our Lord expounded and rendered fascinating!" When Mr. Jenkins says "read" here, we presume he means "*entoned*," and especially as he speaks of it in contradistinction to what those poor children would get in Bible schools. They would hear the Word of God *entoned* then, the next best thing to the Popish method of instructing in an unknown tongue. As to the parables of our Lord, he admits them to be *attractive*, and we say so, too; but we further tell Mr. Jenkins, that what is attractive in our Lord's parables is fully as much so to an ordinary child—*just in the dress in which the Son of God has clothed them*—as they could well be made even by Mr. Jenkins himself; and as to the *exposition* of those parables, alas for either the soundness or safety of that which comes to the mind of either a poor

child or Mr. Jenkins himself, through a Ritualistic medium. One pleasing feature to Mr. Jenkins' mind in the Ritualistic exposition of Scripture seemingly is its "*fascinating*" character; and when we think of the superstitious relics and the idolatrous practices by which this meretricious *fascination* is imparted, we are sorry to find Mr. Jenkins, as a Methodist preacher, *fascinated* by them, and protest against the infatuation which designates the corruption of God's truth, a fascinating exposition of it! Mr. Jenkins, it seems, "doesn't fear the question of ribbons, and doesn't fear Popery." We suppose not; but if he knew what "the question of ribbons" means, and what Popery is, and where it is, we hope he would fear both, and if he did not, so much the greater pity for Mr. Jenkins!

CHAPTER XI.

THE REV. JOHN BEDFORD.

WE now come to the interesting task of dealing with the speech of the Rev. John Bedford, and would simply say, at the outset, that, not being either Romanists or State-Churchmen, we are freed from the obligation which, *if we were either*, we should feel *laid under*, to tender him our heartfelt thanks for the zealous and spirited manner in which, before the Wesleyan Conference, he has endeavoured to screen, defend, and advocate the cause of both ! Having already referred to the antagonism of his *amiable theory*, to his friend Mr. Gregory's *unamiable facts*, relative to the way in which the Conscience Clause is observed by Church of England clergymen, we shall not waste our own and our readers' time by entering minutely here into the details of Mr. Bedford's special, and as multitudes know, groundless pleading in behalf of Papists and State Church clergymen. We can afford to let facts speak for themselves, *versus* theories, however amiable and plausible the latter may be. It is, indeed, gratifying in itself, to find Mr. Bedford, after so much opposition as had gone before, instead of yielding to his more juvenile infirmity—his characteristic impatience of contradiction—gliding so gently into the more mellow disposition which one likes to see characterising age; howbeit, his charity on this occasion, like the Irish priest's idea of the Virgin Mary's good-

ness in helping him *over instead of on his mare*—"is a little *overdone!*"

Mr. Bedford, like most of his Denominational brethren who preceded him, confesses to a singular obtuseness in endeavouring to comprehend the meaning of Mr. Arthur's phrase, "With the Bible." And although several Denominationalists had already assigned a definite meaning to the phrase, and attacked Mr. Arthur on the ground of his recommending *the simple reading of the Bible in the day school*, and declared the strange and odd things they would rather do than support Mr. Arthur's Resolution because of this *very thing*, Mr. Bedford, like a skilful general, comes when the battle is nearly over, and tells his own men that they "have been all fighting in the dark," and are now "all quite at sea!"

This to his Denominational brethren must have been more mortifying than welcome intelligence; but the acceptance of this statement as a fact, will perhaps, account for another, and solve the mystery of their having poured such merciless and destructive volleys amongst themselves during the fight, while signally failing to weaken the ranks of their opponents. At all events, it will be a cover and an apology for such signal blundering, as we have already had repeated occasion to point out in this discussion. Possibly Mr. Bedford might intend it as such, but this darkness of which he speaks is not quite so dense nor yet his position "at sea" so far from the shore as to conceal the unskilfulness of *his own manœuvring* in this contest.

It must, of course, be expected that Mr. Bedford would champion the cause of the laity as a means of opposing Mr. Arthur's Resolution, but he adroitly avoids all

reference to the "shuttlecock kind of policy," pointed out by Mr. Bond, and of which his action in this matter is but part. If Mr. Bedford was really so zealous, we might almost say *jealous*, for the conservation of the rights and privileges of the laity as he here seems, pray why has he acquiesced in that meagre and inadequate representation of Wesleyan laymen embodied in the Resolution which has been passed by the Conference as an Amendment to Mr. Arthur's Resolution? drawn up, too, professedly with the view of giving the laity the opportunity of dealing with this great question, and yet providing that only one layman out of every district shall have a voice in the matter! The Resolution looks in the right direction, so far as it goes, unquestionably; but why, in order to be consistent with himself, did not Mr. Bedford, at the proper time, protest against the scanty and slender representation of the Wesleyan laity which it proposed? We very much doubt if either Mr. Bedford, or any of his co-Denominationalists, who in this discussion sought to make such good capital out of lay representation,—had it in their hearts to seek the extension of the franchise beyond the *one layman per district!*

Mr. Bedford is impressed seemingly with "the utter impracticability of the scheme which Mr. Arthur's Resolution proposes," and on this ground he opposes it. His argument here is very much like that of those who oppose "the Permissive Bill," on the ground that "if such a Bill *was passed* into law, the people would not avail themselves of its provisions!" "It (Mr. Arthur's Resolution) does not propose, says Mr. Bedford, "to deal with the Denominational scheme of Methodism; it

proposes to deal with the entire Denominational System of England and Wales ; it proposes to deal with 12,000 or 13,000 schools ; with the schools of the Church of England, the Roman Catholics, Unitarians, Jews and Secularists, as well as our own. I should like to ask whether any such thing as that is, in any possible view of the case, at all practicable ? We have first to consider the case of the Church of England schools. You are proposing to pass a Resolution which would bring all these 12,000 schools under the action of School Boards, and so shut them up (?) Does this Conference really think that we can do that ? Do you think that the Church of England is a power so small in the nation, and with so little influence on school questions, that it would tamely submit to *our decision* (?) and act upon it ? Those who think so do not know the power of the Church they are about to antagonise !” Alas, for truth and the Protestant world, if Martin Luther had been a faint-hearted John Bedford !

Mr. Bedford has made the utmost of the opposition we should have to encounter, so much, indeed, as to frighten himself, if not others, with its formidability, but we have to remind him that, quite as much as he has exaggerated the one, he has under-estimated the other. It is not to be a question as to whether “the Church of England” (falsely so called) “will consent tamely to submit to *our* (the Methodist) decision and act upon it,” as Mr. Bedford, like a skilful advocate, puts the case for his client ; but whether the Wesleyan body, with the myriads of other Nonconformists throughout the land, can *force this dominant* sect to compliance through the action of the Legislature. This is a somewhat different

putting of the case, and to minds quite as shrewd, and quite as practical as Mr. Bedford's, it appears perfectly feasible.

Mr. Bedford, it seems, has "a great detestation of Popery;" but I do not the less believe, he says, "that there are many sincere and earnest Roman Catholics." Does not Mr. Bedford, in the same sense, believe "that there are many sincere and honest" idolators amongst the devotees of *any other Pagan system*? Has he not as solid, and *even more solid*, ground for believing precisely the same thing in relation to the Hindoos of India, and the blood-loving, but self-sacrificing negroes of the Kingdom of Dahomey and of Central Africa? We have said Mr. Bedford has *even more solid* ground to believe such things of *these* than of *those*, and as far as "*honesty*" is concerned, it is self-evident, inasmuch as every Papist is, by infallible authority, bound and committed by his system to the villainous principle of keeping no faith, not even upon oath, with Protestants.

Can Mr. Bedford imagine that in men brought up in a civilised, not to say a Christian, land, the recognition and adoption of such a principle of atrocious rascality is or can be compatible with "*honesty*?"

Should Mr. Bedford favour us, in reply, with another article of his creed, namely—that he believes there are many "Roman Catholics" who do not adopt this principle, then, granting for the sake of argument that it is so, they are honest, *only so far as they live above their system*. It is the system, not its victims, we attack; and the man whose system of religion is so *irreligious and vile*, that *he feels he must live above it*, in order to practice common "*honesty*," cannot, in reality, be

honest, unless he is further prepared to rejoice at the thought of its overthrow. He would unquestionably do this if he loved and practised honesty for its own sake, instead of as a matter of business gain or worldly expediency. Wherever Mr. Bedford can find a strictly honest Roman Catholic therefore, he will find one who correspondingly hates the flagrant dishonesty and villainy of the Popish system, and if it is the true interests of such a class of persons Mr. Bedford is studying, he is pursuing the wrong course for the securing of such interests by advocating that the system itself should be buttressed and extended by the extension of the Denominational scheme. Mr. Bedford "does not the less believe that Roman Catholics have a conscience." In the abstract they doubtless have, practically they have not; for in the overwhelming majority of cases the unscrupulous and *conscienceless priesthood* are the conscience keepers or conscience destroyers of deluded Papists.

"If I were a Roman Catholic," asks Mr. Bedford, "would I think myself well treated by the course which has been taken in this discussion?" And pray, Mr. Bedford, *if I were a Brahmin*, if I were a Buddhist, if I were a worshipper of Vishnu, a follower of Confucius or of Taou, "would I think myself well treated by the course which has been taken" by the Missionary Committee, which sometimes sits in the "Centenary Hall, Bishopsgate Within?"—the course which has again and again been taken by *Mr. Bedford*, in helping to send out the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Christian Missionaries, with the view of destroying those systems and idolatries of India and China respectively? We defy Mr. Bedford to point out wherein the principle differs; and if it is

one and the same, then his pseudo-Catholicity here can serve no other purpose than to mislead the human mind. This is the connection, moreover, in which Mr. Bedford brings in the words, "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you."

We shall therefore again try the principle in the perverted connection in which he has here introduced it. "I would not like, and *Mr. Bedford* would not like, that a host of Brahmin and Buddhist priests from India, and of Mohamedan and Fetish priests from Africa, should come to England and set up their systems of idolatry and human sacrifice in this Christian land, with the express design of thereby supplanting and overthrowing the Christian religion; and therefore, on Mr. Bedford's own showing, it is *altogether* a "*wrong*" thing for the Missionary Societies of this land to send out the Gospel and Christian Missionaries to India, Africa, and other heathen countries with the avowed purpose of sapping, undermining, and destroying those false systems, and setting up Christianity in their stead!" Possibly Mr. Bedford might reply; but Christ has given the command—"Go ye into all the world, preach the Gospel to every creature;" to which we in turn reply, but it is the same Christ who has "laid down"—"the great law"—"for all his disciples in all time"—"As ye would that men should do unto you do ye even so unto them," and Christ cannot contradict Himself. This will perhaps show Mr. Bedford the importance of not wresting and perverting a principle, by applying it in connections for which it was never intended. That "the great law, which our Blessed Lord laid down for all his disciples in all time"—to which Mr. Bedford alludes,—had, and

in the very nature of the case, was designed to have its well defined limitations of application, is abundantly manifest, and can hardly, we think, be unknown to Mr. Bedford. Has Mr. Bedford been a preacher and a theologian in the Wesleyan Ministry, for the period of forty-one years, without knowing that the primary, the chief, if not the exclusive design of our Lord in laying down the principle referred to, was to frown down and forbid indulgence in the vice of *private revenge*, and to enjoin upon His followers its opposite temper and spirit? Is Mr. Bedford ignorant of the fact, that there are many and important connections in life, in which it is impossible for that principle to be rigidly insisted upon, or applied, without rewarding vice and crime; judicially, and systematically, placing truth, virtue, and righteousness, at a terrible disadvantage and discount; snapping asunder the healthful ties which bind all well regulated society together, and which render social and civil life and intercourse tolerably safe, or even possible. Take the great principle then in the connection in which it was laid down, as an antidote to the vice of private revenge, and it is wise, beneficent and God-like, in its action and spirit; *wrest* and distort it from its legitimate connection, as Mr. Bedford here *has done*, and you are logically driven to a course which realises results the very opposite of those to which the law of Christ properly understood and followed, inevitably leads. In our turn we believe Mr. Bedford is "sincere and honest," but that does not alter the fact that, in this particular instance and connection, *he is egregiously in error*. Mr. Bedford's tenderness to Roman Catholics, leads him specially to dwell upon their grievances in the

event of Mr. Arthur's Resolution being adopted. It is a topic seemingly in his speech, from which he can only with the greatest difficulty tear himself away. "The Roman Catholics say they will not have what the Resolution proposes on any terms. I say *therefore*, the motion is impracticable," exclaims Mr. Bedford! If, indeed, matters have come in this country to such a pass, that, because *the Papists* will not accept of a given scheme, which may be projected for the welfare of the nation, *it must ipso facto become* "impracticable," it is high time that a slumbering Protestantism was opening its eyes, lest it sleep the sleep of death; and above all, it is high time that Wesleyan Ministers had ceased to lay themselves open to the suspicion of advocating or pleading for Popery. "Will ye plead for Baal? let Baal plead for himself." We are strongly inclined to receive this statement from Mr. Bedford with a little discount, however, on the ground that upon this point he is a little too sanguine. We venture to say, that he has not heard Romanists to any considerable extent declare that, "what the Resolution proposes they will not have on any terms," although it is just possible he may have heard Popish priests say as much; but, if Mr. Bedford is willing to concede what these wish, he is contending for *the Romish system*, not for the true interests of any "Roman Catholic."

We have a secret conviction that there are not a few Romanists who would gladly read, and have their children read, their own Douay Bible without note or comment, if they dare; and would inwardly hail, with gladness, any scheme which would put such a desideratum within their reach. To all such, and to Romanists

at large, the adoption of Mr. Arthur's Resolution would be an unspeakable boon ; while only the vile system, and the vile priesthood who conserve it, would suffer, to the benefit of this nation, and, perhaps, of all mankind. Mr. Bedford, as though he were an interested party, sets himself vigorously to resist the very possibility of such a desirable consummation, and assigns as another reason for his doing so, the fact (?) that " Romanists contribute to the taxes out of which the State pays all such things " as education, &c. Does Mr. Bedford really suppose that such an unqualified statement will be accepted as fact by any enlightened Protestant ? " *The Romanists* contribute to the taxes out of which the State pays all these things ! " Do they ? How many of them ? What proportion of them ? Does not Mr. Bedford know that the overwhelming majority of Papists spend their days in poverty, ignorance, squalor, crime and wretchedness, while the degree to which these characteristics prevail is in exact proportion to the grasp which the Popish system has got upon the people, the country or nation ? Is Mr. Bedford ignorant of the fact that pauperism and the expense of crime are the chief heritage bestowed upon even this nation by the prevalence in it of the Papal system ? Is he ignorant of the fact that for every Romanist who is paying taxes in the United Kingdom there are twenty Romanists in as many ways acting as a drain upon the resources of the population, by increasing the taxes which frugal and honest Protestants have to pay ? Assuredly, if their " name and place in the State " were regulated by the amount of taxes which they pay in proportion to their numbers, we should have an infinitely better state of

things in the nation than we have, while the prospects for peace, liberty, righteousness, and true prosperity, would be correspondingly more hopeful than they at present are. Whatever Mr. Bedford may think, we tell him plainly, that *for true Christian charity he will never excel the sainted John Wesley*. And yet, the following is one of his many weighty, judicious, shrewd, important, and just deliverances upon Papists and the Papal System, with the position they ought to occupy in a Protestant State :—" I will set religion, true or false, utterly out of the question. Suppose the Bible, if you please, to be a fable, and the Koran to be the Word of God. I consider not whether the Romish religion be true or false ; I build nothing on one or the other supposition. Therefore, away with all your commonplace declamation about intolerance and persecution for religion ! Suppose every word of Pope Pius's Creed to be true ! Suppose the Council of Trent to have been infallible ; yet, I insist upon it, *that no Government not Roman Catholic, ought to tolerate men of the Roman Catholic persuasion !* I prove this by a plain argument. Let him answer it who can. *That no Roman Catholic does or can give security for his allegiance or peaceable behaviour*, I prove thus :—It is a Roman Catholic maxim, established not by private men, but by a public Council,—' No faith is to be kept with heretics.' This has been openly avowed by the Council of Constance, but it never was openly disclaimed. Whether private persons avow or disavow it, it is a fixed maxim of the Church of Rome. But so long as it is so, nothing can be more plain than that the members of that Church can give no reasonable security to any Government of their allegiance or peaceable behaviour.

Therefore, they ought not to be tolerated by any Government, Protestant, Mahometan or Pagan !”

What does Mr. Bedford say to this? Does he say Mr. Wesley was wrong and he is right? In effect he does say so, and in the strongest language; for he affirms that “*it is our solemn duty to recognise the existence of Papists and their right to have their share in the benefits of the system.*” The extent to which he thinks this “right” should be recognised has already been shown by Mr. Bedford, and amounts to this: That although a National System of Education might prove a boon to the nation, yet, inasmuch as the Papists “will not have it,” it must be pronounced “an impracticable proposal,” seeing it would be a wrong and an unjust thing to attempt to secure the nation’s interests at any sacrifice to Papists or an alien Papacy! Truly we could hardly have expected more ingenious or barefaced pleading in behalf of Papists and the recognition of the Popish System from Cardinal Cullen or the pervert Dr. Manning himself! Mr. Bedford, in his anxiety to oppose Mr. Arthur’s Resolution, has here allowed his zeal grievously to carry him beyond the bounds of prudence and safety. He may, in an age with latitudinarian tendencies like the present, find not a few whose pseudo-liberalism will lead them both to approve of, and applaud, the sentiments to which, on the Romish question, he has given utterance; but we hold that such views cannot be held and deliberately advocated by a Methodist preacher without condemning those held and expressed (*ut supra*) by Mr. Wesley. The venerated founder of Methodism, as charitable as he was Protestant, argues out his proposition, “that no Government *not* Roman Catholic ought to tolerate men

of the Roman Catholic persuasion," at much greater length than we have indicated here; but the citation already given is sufficient. And, *not because it is Mr. Wesley who has said it*, but because what he has said on this point are the words of truth and soberness, we unhesitatingly affirm that Mr. Wesley was right, while Mr. Bedford is entirely wrong.

As to Mr. Bedford's other objection to Mr. Arthur's Resolution, drawn from the assumption that if passed, "it would set up in the rural districts all over England a new cause of contention," by arraying tenants against landowners, squires, and parsons, at the election of School Boards—it may be satisfactorily disposed of by three short words—*The Ballot Bill!* But how, asks Mr. Bedford, is the lack of religious teaching in the day schools, where the Bible is simply read, to be supplied? Here again is the old pernicious and pertinacious insinuation that God's Word has no power to speak for itself, nor the Spirit of God to speak in it, unless there is superadded the erring and, in multitudes of instances, the erroneous and vitiating comments of the teacher! Mr. Bedford asks, "Can the Sunday-school supply the lack?" and it seems *Mr. Binney and he* have infallibly decided in the negative, while Mr. Bedford alone decides that the ministers cannot do it. We answer, as to there being of necessity a "lack of religious instruction where the Bible is regularly read, it is an attack upon the Word of God, and an insult offered to the God who has inspired it; and as to the notion of there being in such schools, *even a diminution* of religious instruction, as compared with what is imparted under the Denominational System, *we are altogether sceptical in relation to it*. It is a

mere notion, a mere fancy ; in which a shadow is mistaken for a substance. Little extra effort would require to be put forth indeed, in the Sunday-schools of the land, in order to exceed the imaginary "lack" of which Mr. Bedford speaks. Mr. Bedford, like others with whom he stands side by side in this discussion, in his last objection to Mr. Arthur's Motion, argues as though, under the present system, the Denominational schools of Methodism could be preserved intact. Hence he speaks of "the direct destructiveness" of Mr. Arthur's Motion. He seems to be in blissful ignorance of the fact that, cast Mr. Arthur's Resolution overboard *as he may*, the day schools of Methodism must inevitably go down one by one, by the action of School Board schools already recognised and in full operation. What has already taken place in connection with the "Radnor Street Schools" is only an earnest of the gradual decay and death, to which the Wesleyan day schools are doomed, let Mr. Bedford cling to Denominationalism as he may.

CHAPTER XII.

THE REV. H. W. HOLLAND AND DR. OSBORN.

THE Rev. H. W. Holland opposed the delay of this question, and urged the Conference at once to declare its mind by voting, on the ground that it was no new question to any of them, their minds having been more or less exercised by it for years. "Mr. Gregory," said Mr. Holland, "has reminded us that Martin Luther would have liked to have been a schoolmaster, if he had not been a minister;" but, I reply, that if Luther had been told that he could not teach religion as a schoolmaster paid by the State, unless he consented to five hundred Papists being paid out of the public funds for teaching Popery, Luther would have refused complicity with Rome, and chosen rather to have been a home missionary than a schoolmaster. Mr. Coley has told us that he objects to the Churches wrangling about the religious element in education,—but whose fault is it that we wrangle? This disputatious position has been forced upon us by the Elementary Education Act. We are compelled by that Act to take an Unsectarian position, and to look after our own interests. I am astonished, however, to hear Mr. Coley say, that if his "not taking State money would not prevent the Romanists from getting State money, then he would take State money along with the Papist." I object to such a position, and am surprised to hear Mr. Coley say what amounts to

selling his principles for money. Besides," continues Mr. Holland, "how does the bargain stand? Since 1839 the Church of England has received from the State for her schools £7,489,997. Unitedly, the Church of England and the Romanists have received £7,982,588; whereas the Wesleyans, for the same period, have only received £595,319. I would not sell my principles for State money; and if I were inclined to do so, I would have a better bargain than the giving of nearly eight millions for the small return of little more than half a million of money. Mr. Jenkins has entreated us not to pass Mr. Arthur's Resolution, for, if we should, all our schools would speedily be merged. What does that prove? We have been told of the love of our people for these schools; but their love to them must indeed be small if they could part with them so easily after the passing of Mr. Arthur's Resolution. Mr. Jenkins has reminded us that Christ has written parables for children; but he surely does not mean to say that the Great Master has not written parables which the children can understand without the help of the schoolmaster to explain them. . . . We have been told that if we come to a vote on this matter, mischief will follow. My answer is, that those who do the mischief must be answerable for it. I believe the safest way is to take the vote; it will open the safety-valve; but if you tie that valve down there will be an explosion. We are divided already upon the question, and it is of no use to impose upon ourselves an artificial and unreal unity.

It has been said that our choice lies between Denominational Education and Infidelity, but I entirely demur to that position. There is no necessary connection between

Secular Education and Infidelity, and there is nothing in Secular instruction calculated to promote Infidelity. But it has been said, we are not to be theorists, we are to look at the question practically ; and I am willing to do so. Practically, then, there is not a town in England where Infidels could obtain a majority on a School Board. It is simply ridiculous to suppose that Sceptics are strong enough to get the schools of the country into their own hands. The number of Infidels is too small to exercise any appreciable effect upon the education of the country. The choice does not lie between Denominationalism and Infidelity ; but it does lie between reading the Bible without note or comment, and Secular Education through the absence of the Bible entirely. I have not lost my faith in the simple reading of the Bible. The *Bible, and the Bible only*, is the religion of Protestants, and those who make disparaging remarks upon the reading of it are forgetting the very principle upon which the Bible Society itself is founded. We are asked what we should gain by giving up our Denominational schools, and I will answer that question by another,—what do we gain by keeping them ? With one hand we are clinging to Denominational schools in large towns, which are being starved out by School Board schools, while with the other hand we are beckoning for schools in rural districts which will not come into life ; and while both our hands are thus fast, the Church of England and the Romanists are reaping a splendid harvest. Something has been said about ships and vessels ; and it does seem to me that there is a good deal of fishing going on in the National waters. There is a great fleet out, and the salmon fishery is very active. But while Episcopalian and Romanist

boats are catching all the salmon, we only get the fishes tails in the Methodist boat; and why should we be content to have the salmon tails stuck between our teeth, and be satisfied with sucking away at the bones, while the Episcopalians and Romanists are getting all the salmon for themselves?"

We cannot but remark that there is a certain degree of coarseness about this metaphor, and the language in which it is clothed; but Mr. Holland makes no pretensions to an excessive euphuism, but is in the habit of saying blunt things in a blunt way; and when there is an ugly unseemliness about the thing to be exposed—can descend to language suited to the subject. The picture of the Wesleyan Conference and Connexion eagerly sucking away at salmon tails and fish-bones, thrown to them from the Episcopalian and Romanist boats, does not present the Denominationalists amongst us in the most respectable and dignified light possible; and yet the figure is not more inelegant than the course it ridicules. In answering those who urged that the Conference should come to no decision on the question before it, until the laity had had the opportunity of dealing with it in mixed committees, Mr. Holland justly scouted the idea of the Conference being "only a piece of red tape to tie together the reports of departments."

Mr. Holland further ably answers Mr. Bedford and others who had tried to represent Methodism as powerless to affect the Legislature as against the influence of the Church of England and Rome, when others, such as Mr. Olver, had given a diametrically opposite representation as to the power of the Methodist body with the Government in other connections. This convenient

changing about, was tantamount to saying that Methodism had power with the Government only in favour of the Denominationalists, but at once lost it, if the Denominationalists were opposed !

“ Mr. Stephenson has told us,” said Mr. Holland, “ that the Church of England’s power in educational affairs would prove too strong for the Wesleyans ; but I would ask Mr. Stephenson how he reconciles that with the opening of the Universities ? The Universities are the strongholds of the Church of England, yet these have not been forced open without help from Wesleyans as a body. Where are the Church rates ?—they are gone ; but not without the help of Wesleyans as a body.” Mr. Holland contended that *we had* power with the Government, and that, added to that of others, it would eventually be sufficient to turn the Denominational element out of the schools of rural districts ; while the power we do thus possess we are sacredly bound to exercise in self-defence and for our own preservation in rural districts. The Church of England was becoming continually more Popish in spirit and practice. Monseigneur Capel,” said Mr. Holland, “ in a lecture which he has recently delivered, has stated that the number of Roman Catholic priests in the diocese of Westminster is 264, of whom 46 had been members of the Church of England ; while no week passes without his receiving three, four, or five persons of the Ritualistic party into the Romish Church. With the Church of England in such a state as this, I do not see that we are called upon to injure Methodism in order to serve her. If I liked the Church of England so well as to injure Methodism for it, I should feel it to be my duty to

walk out of Methodism and join the Church of England."

Meeting Mr. Bedford's challenge to bring forward proof of the intolerance of clergyman of the Church of England, and their dishonourable disregard of a Conscience Clause, Mr. Holland quotes at length "a resolution passed at the Hull Conference Education Committee of Review," which is peculiarly to the point, as referring not to one or two solitary instances of such arrogant and despicable conduct, but declaring "that serious complaints continue to be made from various parts of the Connexion of the intolerance of clergyman," &c. This, moreover, shows how eager for some undiscovered reason or other Mr. Bedford was to implicate his brethren as false accusers *unjustly*, and to justify their unscrupulous enemies *groundlessly*. Mr. Forster had stated that if a case of violation of the Conscience Clause should be brought before him, he would know how to deal with it; but if he was a farm labourer, with half a dozen children to sustain, and with the loss of employment, and the certainty of starvation for himself and family as his only reward, if he brought forward such a case, he (Mr. Forster) would probably not be bold enough to place himself and dependents in such a position. That any poor man should, by Act of Parliament, be placed in such a position that he cannot get his rights without risking the loss of all things, Mr. Holland regarded as disgracefully unjust. Referring to Mr. Shaw's Amendment, Mr. Holland apologised for seeming a little personal, but he had placed him in such a position that, for the sake of those outside, he was bound to demur to it. "Mr. Shaw," said Mr. Holland, "has ridiculed the Resolution

which I brought forward in the Committee of Review, and now Mr. Shaw himself brings forward this very Resolution, and is trying to carry it. After this Mr. Shaw will be mistaken for the leader of the liberal party because he is wearing my cast-off clothes ! And yet it is not *exactly* my Resolution, for Mr. Shaw has only donned part of my cast-off clothes. My Resolution was that the Connexional decision on the Education question should be arrived at, *before the Government should bring in their amendments*, which is only fair to any Government, and just to ourselves." Again, I object to Mr. Shaw's Amendment, because it does not define what topics the Committee, when convened, are to discuss. If we are not at liberty to discuss the giving up of the Denominational System, it is simply of no use to call a Committee together ; and if I had known *that*, when the united Committee met before the passing of the Elementary Education Act in 1870, I would not have attended its meetings. We must give up the Denominational System to save ourselves from complicity with Tractarianism and Popery."

Upon the assumption that the Denominational System was really of any service to Methodism, Mr. Holland illustrated the duty and necessity of still abandoning it, by reference to the well known incident in Russian history in relation to the abandonment and destruction of Moscow, by Russian hands, notwithstanding that it was dear to every Russian, because its destruction alone could save their Empire. Relative to the views advanced by Dr. Rigg, Mr. Holland informed him that, while in Ireland he could nowhere get Protestants to support such views, yet in that Island the Popish priests, wherever he (the

Doctor) might go, would most cordially agree with all he had said ; and, in conclusion, made an earnest appeal in behalf of that priest-ridden country. Mr. Holland's speech in the very nature of the case was, to a large extent, *impromptu*, and must impress all with Mr. Holland's readiness and ability as a debater ; yet it is not the man, but the truth he uttered, we would here commend to the serious attention of our readers. The conclusiveness with which he has met the objections and refuted the statements of most of those who, on the Denominational side, preceded him in the discussion, has left them but little to rest upon, while tenaciously clinging to a system so fruitless of solid good, and the working of which is so fraught with serious and widespread mischief.

Assuredly, had not the position of the Denominationalists been so vulnerable and indefensible, they could never have been so hopelessly defeated, and defeated so soon.

The hopelessness of the position, however, which at this stage must have been manifest to even Dr. Osborn, does not prevent his ingenious attempt to add a few feeble props to the falling fabric. In this who could blame him ? When Dr. Osborn confesses, however, that "most of what he desires to say has been already said by others, and especially by Mr. Stephenson and Mr. Bedford," he, in other words, affirms that, for the most part, he is going simply to repeat what has been already said, but almost entirely swept away as fallacious in assumption, weak or unsound in argument, sophistical as to its manner of statement, inaccurate as to matter of fact, and erroneous as to its exegesis

and application of Scripture! If this was all Dr. Osborn hoped to accomplish, then a saving of time and strength would have been effected by a shortening of the discussion. The Doctor confesses that he is "left without a speech," and (with that speech before us) we partly believe it. Yet, having heard the speaker who preceded him, he seems pressed in spirit to reply.

"Until I heard the last speaker," exclaims Dr. Osborn, I was disposed to say, "is there anything of which it can be said, this is new? The last speaker, I confess, has added to the debate a novelty, and a novelty of a very distressing (?) character. In this chapel, in 1834, we told one of our promising young ministers, and a good friend of mine, that if he wanted to indulge in invective against the Church of England, and to enter into elaborate argument against the Church and State, he must do it outside the Methodist Connexion!" Dr. Osborn was evidently impatient to animadvert upon Mr. Holland's plain, outspoken truthfulness in characterising the so-called State Church as he did; and, hence, not careful as to how he brings it forward, he, in one breath, represents Mr. Holland's just opposition to the Establishment as "a new thing"—"a novelty, and one of a very distressing character," and, in the next breath, proceeds to prove that it was not new, that the like had happened before, and happened even within Dr. Osborn's ministerial memory! Why, if Mr. Holland had been laying claim to originality here, it would have been much more proper for Dr. Osborn to have resisted his claim to that honour, and that according to his own showing, than to declare it to be "a new thing"—"a

novelty." As to its being "a novelty of a *very distressing character*, we doubt not, that to Dr. Osborn's mind, at least, whose State Church proclivities have been frequently professed, it may be "distressing," but, while we wish him well, we rejoice that we have no sympathy whatever with his *distress* in the present instance; and still more, that few in the Wesleyan ministry can herein enter into the Doctor's soul. If we cannot sympathise with Dr. Osborn's distress of spirit, however, we may, perhaps, be allowed to apologise for the slight perturbation which led him to represent Mr. Holland's antagonism to a certain system of error as "a novelty." The truth is, it was altogether new to Dr. Osborn to hear the *Denominational System* formally opposed in open Conference, and to have that Conference asked by a formal Resolution to give that System up in favour of a better. *This new thing* seems to have laid such a hold of the Doctor's mind, as to lead to the slight confusion of ideas which found expression in relation to Mr. Holland's alleged novelty. The drift of the Doctor's rebuke of Mr. Holland being this, that if he thus declared the truth concerning the State Church, "he must do so outside the Methodist *Connexion*"—the body of the Conference at once responded by emphatic cries of "*No, no.*" Dr. Osborn has a marvellous aptitude for putting a proposition before the Conference so ambiguously that it is compelled to cry NO in relation to one thing, while he, sensible of the loophole which he has left for himself to escape by, will not condescend to explain his own ambiguity, but insists upon defiantly saying "Yes," while the Conference, which, happily, will not be ruled by even Dr. Osborn, sends forth a still-increasing volume

of "*No*," until, after the waste of much time, the Doctor is compelled to yield.

We have again and again been somewhat amused at the vehemence with which the Doctor has played this sort of game, when a word of explanation would have removed the ambiguity and set the matter right. Thus we find it on the present occasion. His indicated judgment in relation to Mr. Holland, that if he wanted thus to talk of the Church of England, "he must do it outside the Methodist Connexion," was the imperious decision in relation to which the Conference sent out its emphatic "*No*;" while the Doctor, concealing himself under the simple matter-of-fact in relation to the young man who, thirty-eight years ago, had become, we believe, secretary to the "Liberation Society," persists in saying "Yes." Hence, "Do the brethren who cry *No*, *no*, forget the printed minutes which they are bound to read, and to which all who have come in since 1834 have given their adhesion?" Here, again, the Doctor contrives to jumble up and confound two things, between which the Conference is determined to draw a distinction and to make a difference, resulting as a necessary consequence in its emphatic interruption of the Doctor and repudiation of his covertly insinuated conclusion, namely, that the mouth of Wesleyan ministers is authoritatively sealed, and must not be opened in speaking out against the Church of England, however great her abominations and manifold her heresies! If any such law existed, then it would be high time that the Conference was asked to repeal and abrogate it; but for Dr. Osborn to threaten his brethren with "the Court of Chancery," in this connection, is as pitifully weak as it is supremely ridiculous.

Dr. Osborn reminds us that Mr. Wesley had said, "The Church cannot separate us one from another, but the Dissenters can and will;" while he prudently conceals a much stronger expression of Mr. Wesley's looking in an opposite direction, when he exclaimed, "*Church or no Church, we must save souls!*"

True to his promise, Dr. Osborn *repeats a great deal of what has been already said by others*, and abundantly answered by their Unsectarian brethren; and, therefore, we need not lengthen out these pages with needless repetition in relation to the assumed disaster which would follow the merging of our day schools—a result which, as we have already intimated, and as every impartial mind must see, is inevitable, however gradually realised, under the working of even the present system. For our own part, we would infinitely prefer handing over our schools to School Boards, while yet in a state of health and vigour, to seeing them die of starvation, after a painful and lingering but ineffectual struggle with famine and sickness.

Dr. Osborn is an ardent lover of poetry, and with Wesley's Hymns has long cultivated an intimate acquaintance; but is not always fortunate in his application of them. A little too sentimental and romantic occasionally, when dealing with practical matters; and hence, in the day schools under a School Board, it would not satisfy him, we find, that "the children were allowed to sing a number of moral songs; he would have them go further, and sing"—

*"Other knowledge I disdain,
'Tis all but vanity;
Christ the Lamb of God was slain—
He tasted death for me.*

“ Me to save from endless woe
The Sin-atonig Victim died !
Only Jesus will I know,
And Jesus crucified.”

We should like to know, if Dr. Osborn assumes that *this language* is put into the mouths of “our children” in *even the most model*, and perfect, of his own favourite Denominational schools, at present existing? The exalted spirituality of the language we admire, but, we should like it to be introduced and insisted upon, in a more suitable place, and under more congruous circumstances, than those which combine to constitute, even a *Wesleyan day school*. And, when we consider the large amount of poetic license demanded alike by the godly Author and Compiler of our Hymn Book, before such language as the above can be brought into harmony with *their possession, appreciation, and diffusion too*, of “*other knowledge*,” we can hardly imagine Dr. Osborn’s taste, judgment, and sense of propriety, to be so vitiated as to regard such language as suitable for the mouths of children in the day school. Be this as it may, he has not got it there; and why he should only now come forward, and wish it to be sung in *School Board schools*, after having spent so large a portion of his life without having introduced it for daily use into any of his own favourite Denominational schools, is somewhat bewildering to one’s comprehension. Perhaps, after all we must put it down for what it is worth,—a little of the effervescence of an overflowing sentimentalism. The Doctor, indeed, in his citation of Wesley’s Hymns, in connection with this discussion, *was* peculiarly unhappy, and unfortunate. We trust the lesson he

received in connection with his application of the first verse, of the five hundred and first hymn, may lead him, the residue of his days, to think *more* before applying *even Wesley's excellent Hymns*; and prevent the repetition of such a seeming outrage. Neither the quotation in the first instance, nor the attempt to extricate himself, will bear to be closely examined or impartially criticised for a moment, and therefore in sheer charity to Dr. Osborn, we shall thankfully pass away from the point with this brief allusion.

A large portion of Dr. Osborn's speech is occupied with the endeavour to make out a case of "utter helplessness," as far as Methodist influence in affecting the Government is concerned, and in recommending as a duty,—possibly as a virtue too, the policy of passive obedience in relation to the tyranny and oppression of the dominant sect, and the aggressions of Ultramontaniam in this country and in Ireland, *until*, happily by some sudden turn in the wheel of fortune, the latter shall break its own neck, or hang itself, without human interference, or resistance, *as*, says our practical Doctor, it has already done in Prussia!!! If Dr. Osborn was a Bismark we could bear to be hopeful. The cobweb sophistry of all this, happens to be too transparent as a veil, to conceal what lies behind; and too attenuated to hold the prey, whose feet may for the moment be entangled in the snare.

It is solemnly amusing, moreover, to find Dr. Osborn, like others of his Co-Denominationalists, after declaring the utter helplessness of Methodism to influence Government, to his heart's content; turning immediately round, and declaring that the country could never have had

such a Conscience Clause in the present Elementary Education Act, "had it not been for the painstaking efforts of our own Connexion!" We think there is room for Mr. Bedford here to come in again with the declaration that the Denominational brethren are all "at sea and fighting in the dark!" Dr. Osborn, while taking upon him to castigate Mr. Holland for the enunciation of incontestable truths in relation to the Church of England, takes the liberty of gratifying himself by entering upon the State Church question at some length, and "arguing that," if by a Free Church was meant a Disestablished Church, we should be much worse off then than we are at present."

He forgets that, had there never been a State Church under the Christian dispensation, or, indeed, under any other, there could never have been State persecution for religion. Perhaps, indeed, he has never thought of this, but we commend the truth to his understanding, and defy him to disprove it. In relation to Dr. Osborn's definition of a Free Church, we answer him that, by a Free Church, whatever else we mean besides, *we certainly do mean a Disestablished Church*, as no Church wearing State trammels can possibly be free; neither can she be pure in doctrine or in practice for any considerable length of time. The Church of England, so-called—but, thank God, falsely so-called—does not now even profess to be a Scriptural Church, but to be simply based upon, and sustained by, the letter of a human law as interpreted by men, some of whom seem to know as much of true religion as a Hottentot who has never heard the Gospel of Christ. As Dr. Osborn has entered somewhat freely into the Church and State

question, however, we shall not be anxiously careful to answer him in this matter. We tell him that it is high time that the antiquated notions which have long possessed the minds of certain Methodists, relative to our being laid under the necessity of maintaining a warm and friendly side towards the State Church, were exploded, to give place to notions of a more safe and healthy character; high time that those who wish to be regarded *as in love with God's truth and the interests of Christ's kingdom*, had abandoned the false position of attempting to say a word in behalf of such an Establishment; that whatever obligation in this direction may be supposed to exist by reason of former decisions of Conference, can with equal ease be relaxed or disannulled by the same power which imposed it; and that, unless a mighty and sudden moral transformation takes place within the State Church, of which there is not the slightest probability, Dr. Osborn may not live to be a very old man before he sees Wesleyan Methodism, *as a body, compelled by her very fidelity to God, truth, and righteousness*—moving with other Nonconformists to make an end of such an unholy compact and alliance as at present exists between the Episcopalian Church and the State.

We may be told of Mr. Wesley's attachment to the Church, which some of us are disposed to regard as the greatest infirmity of his character, and the chief defect in his administration; yet no man, with an impartial mind and a grain of intelligence, can pretend that the English Church of Wesley's day, corrupt as it was, is the English Church of the present time. It had then got sportsmen, drunkards, profane swearers, and adulterers in its ministry, just as it has probably got now; but

its professed doctrines were, then, comparatively sound and Scriptural. Now the very foundations of it are a mass of corruption and idolatry; its clergy are, to a large extent, "evil men and seducers who wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived;" while those who profess to be evangelical are "dumb dogs who will not bark," with a few solitary exceptions, and then their whine is so feebly heard, and gives forth such an uncertain sound that few can tell, whether the spaniels are uttering a fawning cry for bread and promotion, or a sound of challenge and defiance to the foe. With such an Establishment we are bold to say *Mr. Wesley would have had no complicity*, and neither must and neither shall his faithful sons in the Gospel.

If the country does not speedily secure the disendowment and disestablishment of a pro-Romish Anglicanism, it must, by the simple development and natural growth of the present system, be speedily cursed again with an endowed and an established Popery. It is in vain for Dr. Osborn to talk of what the Conference has done and said in the past, as though the Wesleyan Conference, like a professedly infallible Popish council, was incapable of reconsidering and altering its decisions in relation to certain great public questions which themselves have become widely different, in nature, aspect, and bearing, from what they were when those decisions were arrived at. In relation to such matters *consistency itself may constrain* the Conference entirely to alter its course and reverse its policy.

For Dr. Osborn's edification we will give an illustration of what we mean. Nothing has more distinguished the Wesleyan Conference than the bold front and un-

compromising antagonism, which it has ever presented to both the spirit and aggressions of Popery in this country, and wherever else its voice has been heard. At one period this was compatible with the position of a friendly neutrality towards the Established Church ; but if, as is the fact, this Church changes its character ; becomes filled with Jesuits and other Popish orders, both lay and cleric, practises Popish customs, teaches Popish doctrines, vilifies and execrates Protestantism and the glorious Protestant Reformation ! avows, through its ministers, its great object to be, the restoration of Papal rule and domination in this country ; and establishes by law its right, while eating Protestant bread and pocketing Protestant money, to propagate the worst heresies and blasphemies of Popery throughout the Nation, and is actually found doing this to a greater extent, and more effectually than the avowed propaganda of the Papacy itself—then the Wesleyan Conference *can only be consistent with itself* by offering to this transformed monster the most determined hostility which it ever avowed and manifested towards Popery under that more honest name !

This is the position to which, at no distant date, the Wesleyan Conference, we predict, by the very love of God, of truth, righteousness, justice, consistency, country, self-preservation, and every consideration that is sacred and precious—shall be driven ; and, deeply convinced that delay here is dangerous, may God Almighty speed the happy day !

CHAPTER XIII.

REPLY OF REV. WILLIAM ARTHUR.

THE Rev. Wm. Arthur, in using his right of reply, after acknowledging and thanking his brethren for their courtesy and kindness, wished to point out, "that with regard to the Amendment which had been proposed by Mr. Shaw, it was a most remarkable thing, that among all the able, accomplished, and disciplined friends and advocates of the Denominational System in the Conference, there had not been one of them who had presented an amendment asking the Conference to say that it believed in the Denominational System! No man had ventured to call for a vote which would commit that Conference to the Denominational System as the permanent System of the Conference and of the country, and he would like that fact not to be overlooked or mistaken. The Amendment was that the Conference deemed it inexpedient to reopen the general question. They had already had three years of discussion on the great question, and he thought every brother minister present must acknowledge that during that period less had been done to agitate by those who took his own view of the subject than by those who held opposite views. Out of their Connexional meetings he had done nothing; nothing in the way of writing articles in reviews, or in attending public meetings. But while he had himself remained thus quiet, he had seen with deep

concern the growing feeling of the Connexion that the Conference had never had an opportunity of altering its mind upon the question ; and now that it had, he desired again to call attention to the significant fact, that during the entire discussion there had been no attempt made by any, to challenge a vote of the Conference *in favour* of the Denominational System. It was matter of history from that moment, and as such it could not be altered. In course of the debate much doubt seemed to have arisen in the minds of some, as to what he meant in the Resolution by the expression "With the Bible." He really thought he had explained that in his speech, and especially when he cheered Mr. Greeves in saying that the reading of the Bible was to be compulsory. What he said was, work for the establishment of the National side, and against the Denominational side. The policy of the Amendment would commit them to this—they would wait until the Government had told them what alterations it was going to make, and then they would consider those announced alterations. That he considered would not be fair to any Government. The Government ought to be in a position to deal with the known tendencies and influences of the country, before deciding upon its alterations ; and he thought that the Amendment, which committed them to such a course as Mr. Shaw's Amendment indicated, was altogether impolitic. Their true policy was to form their own judgment, put it forth, *and then* meet the Government when the time came. As to the *argument of the discussion*, Mr. Arthur said he would like to know how many of his objections had been met ? Had anything been brought forward to show that the Denominational System *was not* an Anti-

Bible System ; or that it did not set up Romish Schools? Had it been shown that it *did not* tend to convert the country to Secularism, or that under it the rights of poor parents were not bought, or that it was not a system of Concurrent Endowment? Had it been shown by any that it did not tend to split up the country into parties which became factious? Had anything of this kind been attempted? "Mr. Bedford has shown," said Mr. Arthur, "that this would be done to some extent by the School Boards, and by our having the periodical agitation of an election. Well, it might, it would, and perhaps a little agitation and discussion about our own affairs would be no great harm in many rural districts of this country. I believe, on the contrary, it would do much good. Again, there has been no attempt to show that the Denominational System does not restrict the educational powers of the country to the *monied classes, and therefore to the Church of England*. I thank Mr. Bedford for giving to the Conference such a clear exposition of my Resolution. All through, the argument ran, as though I had presented to the Conference a Resolution reading thus :—"The Conference judges it desirable that we should merge *our own schools* and leave all other schools standing." Is that my Resolution? Is that my meaning? Surely it cannot be supposed that I ever meant anything so foolish! My Resolution is that *the System* should be gradually merged ; but I am in favour of the Methodists teaching each school upon its own merits, as I said yesterday ; and keeping it up or not keeping it up, as their judgment and conscience see to be most for the interest of the work of God in their own locality ; and yet use all their influence on the National side of

the Act, and advise the Government to work in that direction instead of in any other. I think the question has been argued *very little upon its merits*. . . . It has been said that we have no need to fear Popery, but taking the views and notions of the world upon the subject, it is *Romanism, not infidelity* that has succeeded in putting the Bible out of the pulpit, the family, and the popular tongue, and in keeping it out for successive ages; and as a matter of political fear, I fear Romanism far more than I fear infidelity. But, again, as a matter of theological relation, what has produced most of the infidels in the world? How much of the infidelity of Europe is clearly traceable to the reaction against the corruptions of the Papacy!

We have no need therefore to put the two systems in contrast; we should fear both, and in the name of God go for the Bible. We have been asked to remember what Prince Bismark is doing. Well, what is he doing? Is he not just taking the education of the people out of the hands of the Jesuits? I believe there is no way in which we can do this so well, as quietly, in our old Methodist way, by acting upon the Government of the country, not suddenly and with outcry, but by that kind of steady action which in time will tell. I exhort my junior brethren, if they would keep the blessing of God, and the future of Methodism clear and open, while they form their own judgment, and calmly express their opinions, to avoid political partisanship; to avoid political heat, to avoid those who would lead them into it, and to go for the maintenance of Methodism with that wonderful historical inheritance which God has given it. I have been asked to withdraw my Resolution; the Con-

ference has my Resolution, and I cannot withdraw it. If I should withdraw that Resolution this day, William Arthur would never have any power again in this Connexion, to guide or move, or moderate anything in its behalf. It is for the Conference to say what is to be done with these Resolutions; you have power to vote my Resolution down, you have power to say, that it ought not to be put, and power to do with it, just what you please. I believe that to pass my Resolution, is the thing which you ought to do; not indeed, without calling the laity together. You know my views on the entire matter, but I say whatever the Conference decides upon, we must stand by that decision. If I cannot do anything with you face to face, I have no desire to do anything by means of other people. Whatever the Conference may decide therefore, I will stand by the Conference. I believe that this discussion will do a world of good; it will for one thing clear the air. There are many men here, who had no idea that such things could be said by such men, with such consummate power, and admirable feeling, in favour of the Denominational system; and I say again, I believe the discussion will do good all round *if no man will threaten us!* You must not do that, and you must stand still. You must do with my Resolution just what your conscience and judgment tell you is right, and you must go on considering this question, until you have talked yourselves, and talked our people into agreement as to our course of action." All must admire the spirit, as well as the ability by which this reply is characterised.

In William Arthur neither young nor old will find, in example or precept, insinuation, look, or gesture, the

faintest shadow of encouragement to rebellion, or insubordination to constitutional authority. As generous as he is bold, he urges submission upon others, and pledges himself to the duty of standing by the decision of the supreme power, however opposed that decision, for the time being, may be felt to be to his own personal convictions of what is right and best. At the same time, claiming and availing himself of all the rights—that of private judgment, and of freedom of speech, secured and guarded alike by the laws of a free country and of a truly free Church—he attacks in high places, and in the most open and heroic manner possible, whatever he feels and knows to be wrong in principle, in spirit, or in action; however sheltered under the wing of custom, defended by numbers, by official sanction, by self-interest, or party prejudice and pride. Clear as to the stand he takes and the issues to which it leads, no amount of sophistry or misrepresentation can shake his confidence in the cause he has espoused; and while exhibiting the gentleness of the Christian, and the urbanity of the natural gentleman, no power of man can lead him to swerve from the course upon which he has entered, much less turn him back in the way by which he came. If fairly beaten after he has bravely fought, he submits to the severer laws of *friendly warfare*, with a grace which shows the triumph of truth and of right principles, not personal victory, to be the goal for which he so manfully contends. Yet in such a cause he will never consent to lay down his lawful weapons until either the arm that wields them is paralysed in death, or the battle is in triumph carried to the gate. And now, having said these things, which we conceive truth fully

justifies, and justice demands, we think it right and needful, not, indeed, for the sake of those who know Mr. Arthur, but for the sake of those who know him not, further to add, that Mr. Arthur has had no more to do with, and knows no more of, the existence of these pages, nor yet of the Author's intention to write them, than Dr. Rigg or Dr. Osborn. The Author has no other motive or object in view for the concealment of his name, than such considerations as may be understood to weigh with a publisher in undertaking the publication of a work from the pen of one whose name is not yet widely known in the literary world. In behalf of his brethren in the ministry, who in the Conference took an active part in the discussion of the great question here and there dealt with, the Author may also be allowed to add that his voice was not heard on that occasion. The more widely and openly the two systems of Education are discussed, the better for the interests of truth, righteousness, and the British nation.